■ METRO / A22
'Johnny Midnight' shot in Las Piñas office; grudge angle eyed

■ WORLD / A12
CIA claims Fidel Castro has Parkinson's disease based on studies

■ BUSINESS / B1
10-month deficit 26% lower at P115.5 billion

■ ENTERTAINMENT
PDI's man in Hollywood meets up with 'greatest actress of her generation'

Bird flu, terrorism, poverty on GMA plate at Apec meet

By Christine O. Avendaño in Manila and Christine Y. Figueroa in Busan, South Korea

THE BIRD FLU VIRUS, TERRORISM AND poverty are the "three key areas of concern" that the Philippines will push for at the 13th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec)

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Unkempt garden, dirty toilet infuriate Gloria

By DEC Calimbahan Jr.

Friday, November 18, 2005 ▲ 28 pages | vol. 29 | no. 342

Finger-pointing begins

WINDSWEPT: President Arroyo arrives at Gimhae Air Base in South Korea on a cold, windy Thursday to attend the 13-country 13th Apec leaders' meeting in Busan. At right is the President's daughter Lilli.

DFA now seeks custody of 6 GIs 17 days after rape

By Juliet Lisbeth Javellana, Nati Gutierrez and Nikko Dizon in Manila and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

PHILIPPINE OFFICIALS WERE FINGER-POINTING YESterday on who was responsible for six US Marines accused of rape being under US Embassy custody, prompting lawmakers to slam them for negligence and to call for a revision of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis told the legislative oversight committee on the VFA that the Department of Foreign Affairs was "in consultations with the US Embassy on the transfer of custody of the suspected US military personnel."

The bicameral panel yesterday sought clarification of VFA provisions concerning jurisdiction and custody of the Americans accused of raping a 22-year-old Filipina woman on Nov. 1 at the Subic Bay Freeport in Zambales at the conclusion of counterterrorism exercises in the Philippines.

During the hearing, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez was asked to explain why the three-year-old treaty need not immediately be the RP authorities. (See related story on Page A4.)

Gonzalez said he came to know of the incident when he got a call from President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier.

"And the only order she made was not to let [a similar] the dignity of our country," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said he later received a telephone call from Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita informing him about the Subic incident and asking him to immediately call retired Gen. Avelino Cruz Jr., deputy administrator of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

"He told me his office had no clear point custody of the American service people and he said the captain of the ship, at least until was complicated, was demanding custody because the ship was

Fertilizer probe opens more cans of worms

By Philip C. Tabosa

IT JUST GOT CRIMSONER AND CRIMSONER.

As the emanations of the Senate probe of the P728-million fertilizer fund, the misplaced provincial treasures of Antonio Nonoy and the overpriced guaranteed did not receive "a single drop" of fertilizer although P6.5 million from the Countryside Development Fund (CDF) program had been released for the purpose.

The company that was supposed to deliver fertilizers to the province turned out to be a supplier of rice in Cabanatuan City.

The Fund was meant solely for Gloria-manipulated or allegedly diverted to boost President Macapagal-Arroyo's election campaign in 2004.

Nonoy Bocalbos' brother Emilio Bocalbos Jr. — a so-called "farmer agriculturist Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante should be able to answer questions about the alleged scam.

In fact, Bocalbos, and Bolante should be asked about the controversial fund because he was the one who had asked for them.

GMA wary of FVR, JDV, says paper

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO awoke from wary of her friends than her foes, if the newsbulletin on the pro-Estrada security clique.

The bandwidth can print votes, and so "new lows dictated by Mr. Bonoan to a secretary analyst appear that she wanted former President Fidel V. Ramos watched closely and Speaker Jose de Venecia replaced. (See story on Page A20.)

SPECIAL REPORT

Dr. Bonoan's leadership was severely challenged—unsuccessfully—by Estrada del Norte Rep. Peregrine Pichay. Both were ex-stalwarts of the ruling Lakas-CMD and staunch allies of Mr. Arroyo.

"What happened to Dr. Bonoan in the House was one of the things that convinced me those marginal votes were for real, that they were the President's thoughts," former Sen. Francisco Tatad told the Inquirer.

Tatad gave the Inquirer a copy of the document, which was dated Sept. 9 but was reportedly presented to Mr. Arroyo and her Cabinet by her security advisers on Oct. 5. He said it had come from a "friendly source" in Malacañang.

The copy bore annotations that, Tatad said, quoting his source, were dictated by Mr. Arroyo after the Cabinet meeting. The annotations indicated that, among other things, Mr. Arroyo was considering anti-terrorism including suspension.

But Press Secretary Ignacio Bunyi yesterday dismissed the paper as "a

Blood, sweat and tears for P5,000-a-night tips

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

(Second of three parts)

SATURDAY NIGHT—NO DOUBT ABOUT it. Filipino businessmen, like the resident denizens of the Tree Bistro Hotel Club, make a lot of money.

SPECIAL REPORT

The dancers, most of whom are referred to as "new hire" (because they're under gymnastics and skincare lessons), drake lunch with the club's customers after each of the three one-hour shows a night and count many such WEGGOO as P5,000 to P10,000 a night alone.

This is how the gifts that many customers give these favorite entertainers, whose bosses and hostel bodies can put the average Filipino woman to shame.

The customers, mostly middle-aged men and women, come bearing diapers, flowers in home boxes, candies, fish towels and more have Hermes cigarettes, and Chivas Regal, and Louis Vuitton or Gucci bags.

But the Tree Bistro Hotel Club dancers, and the rest of some 60,000 Filipino entertainers making a living in Japan, are for the 81,000 nurses and caregivers hoping to bring in Japan, are for the 81,000 nurses and caregivers hoping to bring their family a small taste of it.

"The stuff of Tree Bistro," said

CELIA DIAZ-LAUREL poses in front of her late husband's photographs here.

Doy: 'The man who gave way'

By Fernando del Mundo

THE MARY MEMORIOUS outlived two days after the assassination of Senator Ni Laurel's ashes was buried at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani in Makati City.

In it, the former Vice President, foreign secretary and senator provides a glimpse of the tumultuous years before and after the first Edsa People Power revolution.

The somewhat uprising nearly two decades ago ousted the dictator Ferdinand Marcos and catapulted Corazon Aquino to power.

With the diary and notes from voluminous documents, his widow Celia Diaz-Laurel, subtitled a book titled "Doy Laurel."

Lea stars but MiG rocks opening of Ad Congress

By Maryjo Quimpo-Rupisa

CEBU CITY—INTERNATIONally acclaimed Filipino singer Lea Salonga may have been the biggest star, but it was Philippines-Australian rocket MiG Aprosa who brought the house down at the start of the 19th Philippine Advertising Congress here yesterday.

Suddenly, the event turned into a hotel ruin erected at 9:30 a.m. as dyers, who were the hosts of Filipinos when he played third in the second "Rock Star 2005" reality TV competition, appeared in tight black pants and black blazer and sang "My Neighbor's Yes."

The audience screamed, rose from their seats and swayed to

"I CAN'T SING and I can hardly dance," Antonio speaker Jaime Angeles Zobel de Ayala tells Ad Congress delegates in a high after Ayala's evening. But he knows his Globe's 3G cell phone.

AYALA FEVER: Cavorting high that one overwhelmed PDI president/CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez catches it at the 19th Ad Congress where the Filipino-Australian star of the MiG reality show, MiG Ayala, brings the house down with "My Will Back You."

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2004

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Abu leader slain in Tawi-Tawi

By Evan Z. Pazzibugan and Christine O. Avendaño

AN ABU SAYYAF LEADER BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN behind the abduction of resort workers in Malaysia in 2003 was killed in an encounter with Marines on Wednesday, as Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Generoso Senga got ready to head to Sulu today one week after clashes broke out between government troops and Moro rebels.

"If he going there to see what is really happening on the ground and what our troops need so that we can initiate the operations and finish the job right away," said Senga, who was interviewed in Subic-subang.

Janjalani Group, also killed in the attack on the resort workers from Sipadan, Tawi-Tawi.

Also slain were alleged Abu Sayyaf members Pulo Alih and Hadi Wahi. Upon's son, Mihal Ututalsa, was reportedly captured. He age was not given.

Members of Marine Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 12 were involved when they ran into Dawan's group, triggering a 20-minute firefight, according to Marine spokesperson Maj. Rickjanders Ordiales.

The troops seized three high-powered firearms and a handheld radio from the bandits, Ordiales said.

Long wanted

He said Dawan was on the group that kidnapped and brought the resort workers—three Filipinos and three Indonesians—to the Philippines.

"The hostages were seized from Sabah. One of them was killed, one escaped and four others were later freed after negotiations with their families," Ordiales said.

When the group's leader, Serab Ibrahim, was killed in an encounter with Marines in June last year in Lugasan, Tawi-Tawi, Dawan reportedly replaced him.

"We have been trying to get to Dawan for a long time. It is wanted for the abduction [in Malaysia]," Ordiales told AFP.

Ordiales said the Tawi-Tawi encounter was not connected to the increased fighting in Sulu where Marines and Army troops are engaged in hot-fire with a combined force of the Abu Sayyaf and the so-called Misuari Breakaway Group.

The Sulu clashes, which erupted last Friday, have killed four Marines and wounded 22 others, while around 17 Abu Sayyaf members have reported killed. With an AFP report

Police explain video

By Luige A. del Puerto

A SENIOR POLICE OFFICIAL TRIED TO explain the actions of the Traffic Management Group officers who were captured on video shooting in three cyclists even after they stopped to find identity bags subdued.

Chief Supt. Augusto Angeles, the head of the TMG, defended the 13 officers, insisting that a "state of danger" still existed when the officers were seen shooting at the suspects as they lay slumped on their car.

Police claimed that the three men were cyclists who were killed in a shootout with motorcycling TMG officers in Pasig last Nov. 7.

The video showing plainclothes police officers firing at the apparently severely wounded suspects raised suspicions the men may have been summarily executed.

Yesterday, a relative of one of the suspects, Brian Anthony Dalay, said the family would pursue the case with the killing.

Robert Lim Joseph, a cousin of Dalay's father, said the family would cooperate in the investigation of the Commission on Human Rights, and then take legal action against the police.

Depressed and traumatized

"Right now, the family is depressed and traumatized," he said.

The police said Dalay, Aaron Go Ordoño and Francis Ellamosas were members of a notorious and well-funded carjacking syndicate responsible for a series of violent robberies in Metro Manila in the past months.

"What we really want is to find out the truth. But the truth can no longer speak. Who did they have to silence them? Why did they have to shoot them like that? You saw the video," Angeles said.

In an interview with GMA 7, Angeles said at least two of the suspects "moved and appeared to be standing for a spell" when the officers approached the car.

Two guns were later found in the car, a 9mm pistol and a 9mm high-tec.

Angeles said he questioned the officers one and asked why they had to fire more shots as shown in the video.

He quoted one of the officers as saying: "Sir, when I opened the car's [front] door, I saw a hand move. It looked as if the hand was reaching for a gun. I thought I will not wait for him to shoot me."

As for the second video clip showing four officers taking cash amounting to P60,000 in the car, saying they were here playing cowboy, Angeles said they were looking for a grenade.

He said the officers had received information that the suspects could be carrying a grenade.

Angeles said the video did not "depict the complete picture" of the incident.

He said the suspects had already engaged the officers in a firefight and the latter brought their "state of relief" when they went to check on the suspects' car.

"These actions departed their state of mind, the state of danger at the time," Angeles said.

Probable cause

Inspector Gen. Alexis Casumbal, the chief of the PNP Internal Affair Service, said the IAS would determine within the next few days whether there was probable cause for criminal and administrative charges against the 13 officers.

"If probable cause is established during the preliminary investigation, then we will charge them both in court criminally and administratively," said Casumbal.

PNP Chief Director Gen. Arturo Lomibao has directed the IAS to convene a TRIG fact-finding team to report on the case and come up with its own investigation.

Casumbal said the IAS investigation could lead to changes in the police's operational procedures and training system. With a report from Norman Bordadora

New 'Hello Garci' bombshells a dud

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER A LULL OF MORE THAN a month, the Senate resumed its inquiry into the "Hello Garci" scandal yesterday, but fell short of its usual as well as the public's expectations to treat "surprise witnesses" did not show up.

Judge Hipolito Bruno and three other residents of Lanao del Sur were supposed to testify on the role of Iranian-related Mecapati Aminoden Inchimal in the alleged electoral fraud in Mindanao, but they did not arrive amid word why they were not honoring the Senate's invitation.

The absence of Bruno, a judge of the Shariah Circuit Court of Wao, Bumbaran, Ahmad Lantian, Lomala Ali, who talked with Mecapati Ibrahim, all of Barung town, supported many and set off speculations as to why they stayed away. The four were reportedly in in Cagayan de Oro.

"I thought he (Mecapati) was going to come. He told me (Hendra Hen Jewel L." said Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the committee on national defense and security. "Well, disappointing na naman to be the last today."

Biazon, Macoland and Refugio claimed in separate interviews with the Press Times of 400,000 last month that they had been tapped by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo to settle election officials in Mindanao to ensure Mr. Arroyo's victory in last year's presidential election.

Arroyo's National Security Council reportedly denied any hand in electoral fraud.

Biazon said that Mones had counted on "affidavit" detailing Mr. Arroyo's alleged involvement in the fraud. But Biazon did not disclose the contents of the statement because it had not been agreed and he wanted Mones's credibility affirm or deny the statement.

Hadji Abdullah Dalidig, chair of the Bilateral Movement for Peace Mediation in Mindanao, testified at yesterday's hearing and requested duties he had made earlier that votes for Mr. Arroyo had been padded while those for the late actor Fernando Poe Jr. and other candidates had been trimmed down.

A CALL TO PURSUE PEACE AND JUSTICE-BASED DEVELOPMENT IN SULU

Nine months ago, armed hostilities erupted between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front affecting close to 18,000 families in 73 barangays in mainland Sulu. Casualties of war from both warring forces were in significant numbers. While many of the affected civilian communities are still struggling to recover from the damage of the February war, fresh hostilities broke out in the municipality of Indanan a week ago, a stone's throw away from the capital town of Jolo. Potentially, the conflict can spill over to the rest of the Sulu mainland and the region unless halted NOW.

Tragically, Sulu remains the poorest province in the Philippines with a poverty incidence of 88.8 percent in 2003. Life expectancy at birth is 52.8 years, short of 67.2 years if one were a resident of Manila. Other glaring human development indicators show that 82.7 percent of households in Sulu have no access to electricity, and only 21.3 percent have attained at least six years of primary education. A 2005 Talang Mindanao survey of the water sources in half of the 18 municipalities in Sulu reveals that 92 percent of these sources are locally-contaminated, and 86 percent are salty. These sadly show how undignified the quality of life has been for the Sulunens. Needless to say, such is even made worse in a situation of war.

The Sulu multi-stakeholders engaged in the *Pagtabangan* ReSolTa process have begun to evolve alternative sustainable interventions to address poverty, conflict and marginalization within a human security framework. This has begun with a process of local ownership of the ramparts and the solutions of the same, and helping local leaders create new institutional arrangements that will provide people human security. Such pilot efforts towards institutional and societal transformation are often easily destroyed by armed conflict. **History has proven that fighting does not offer a viable solution.** We deepen societal divides entrapped in a spiraling force of displacements of families and destruction of lives, worsening conflict and resulting to development paralysis.

The human cost of armed conflict does not only refer to physical damages to lives and property but lost opportunities. Worse, at this time of growing unpeacefulness by the majority of Filipinos, vital public funds for development are diverted to war operations, and subsequent rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. There is also the danger of fueling discrimination and prejudice against Muslims in the context of war against terrorism. There needs to be a clear delineation of terrorist groups from the general Muslim population.

We, the **Pagtabangan Sulu Consumers for Peace and Human Security**, call on our local officials and our people of Sulu to help bring back the peace in Lupah Asug at all costs. Let us work together in guarding the peace in the true spirit of Islam that allows for authentic human development. This process can only begin with our own hands in our own land.

We, the **Pagtabangan ReSolTa Coalition**, challenge the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, and the national government in general as well as ALL parties in the conflict to end the fighting and work for PEACE. Together, let us sincerely pursue alternative sustainable peace tracks to end armed conflict in Sulu. This can begin with an authentic grassroots-based consultation with the people of Sulu on their vision and goals for peace.

Pagtabangan ReSolTa commits to continue its peace building and development efforts for Sulu, which it had struggled to begin with collectively more than a year ago. Let us give the people of Sulu the chance to develop their lives in peace and harmony as it rightfully had for many years before Martial Law.

Pagtabangan ReSolTa, a joint effort of initially ten private organizations to engage and support local leaders in the provinces of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-tawi, is working to develop lasting solutions to the problem of poverty, conflict and marginalization in the region. Local Consensus composed of multi-sectoral leaders from the governmental organizations near the Pagtabangan engagement process in Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Wrongfully deported Pinay returning to Australia today

SYDNEY—A SERVANT[illegible] woman who was wrongfully deported to the Philippines by an immigration department bungle will return to Australia Friday, her lawyers said Thursday.

Vivian Alvarez Solon was deported as an illegal immigrant in July 2001, even though she is a naturalized citizen, and she reunites with several splendid days and she was discovered in a Manila hospital for the dying last May.

Since then, her return to Australia has been delayed as her lawyers negotiate a compensation package with the Australian government.

One of her legal team, Harry Friedman, confirmed that Alvarez Solon would arrive in Australia on Friday.

A government watchdog last month described the immigration department's handling of the 43-year-old mother-of-two's case as "catastrophic."

The two aims to fight after it was revealed another Australian, German-born Cornelia Rau, was wrongfully imprisoned for 10 months as an illegal immigrant.

The immigration department has since admitted wrongfully detaining more than 200 people who were in the country legally and revealed many had received compensation packages in return. I'm not going public with their cases. AFP

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Gonzalez denies coddling GIs, wants Katrina disbarred

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ yesterday said he would seek the disbarment of lawyer Katrina Legarda for accusing him of coddling the six Americans accused of rape when he ordered their immediate turnover to the US Embassy.

"She's telling a lie," Gonzalez said of Legarda's charges, made in an interview with the Inquirer on Tuesday. (See related story on Page A2.)

"She should prove it that I talked to the Americans and if she can prove it, I will resign," Gonzalez told the Inquirer before the start of the Legislative Oversight Committee on the Visiting Forces Agreement hearing at the Senate.

"If she cannot prove it, she should submit back her lawyer's commission because in our oath of lawyers we say we do not tell falsehoods. I have not talked to the Americans," Gonzalez said.

"I will file a complaint against her in the Supreme Court," Gonzalez added.

Gonzalez described as a "totally false story" Legarda's statement that Gonzalez had instructed the Olongapore City fiscal to turn over the six US Marines to the US Embassy after he got profiled on a US security on the early morning of Nov. 2, a day after the alleged rape of the 22-year-old Filipina woman occurred.

"I've not talked to any American—since this incident happened in fact two to three days ago—I've not also talked me. That is a tall tale and a total lie, somebody must be hallucinating," Gonzalez said.

Lea stars but MiG rocks opening of Ad Congress

From page A1

the music while taking shots of the star with camera-equipped mobile phones.

'Uncongress'

It was indeed a good start to an "uncongress congress," Boyd Schlichterman, the fair chair, said in her opening speech.

Solange was, of course, the main performer and the audience was not to be disappointed when she arrived on stage in a black and red maternity gown. She said she had just passed the "first trimester nauseating term" and was beginning to feel normal again.

Close to 2,700 people registered as delegates and volunteers in the two-day congress, despite the rumbles and challenges that marred its staging this year. About 500 more are expected to attend the Araw Awards tomorrow, the Oscars of the local industry, which honors excellent work in the past two years.

KBP absence

Schlichterman said the huge attendance was not even "without our dear friends at KBP" (Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas).

The KBP, composed of TV and radio stations nationwide, had traditionally been among the major sponsors of the ad congress. It pulled out of the advertising Board, the umbrella organization of the Ad Congress this year, saying doubts on whether the event would push through.

Schlichterman said the KBP had been invited to join the gathering. "We wanted the congress to be for the industry and not to likes club."

But the KBP hardly had any delegates.

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, president and chief executive officer of Ayala Corp., started away from his prepared keynote speech. "Let us make one thing clear—I can't see sing, and I can hardly dance," he said, as he acknowledged the high energy of the audience following Arroyo's opening remarks.

"Story or have to bring you to look at reality," Zobel de Ayala said before proceeding with his talk on "Selling Brand Philippines."

He cited three elements to engage in the global economy—a mix of macro and micro reforms, human resources and demographic advantage, and the private sector and small and medium enterprises as the engine for economic transformation.

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Cops rescue kidnapped girl

By Leigh A. del Puerto

POLICE HAVE RESCUED A HALF-starved 12-year-old girl one week after two men wearing ski masks snatched her from her father while he was driving her to school in Angeles City, Pampanga, police said yesterday. The kidnappers had not fed the girl for three days because her parents could not afford the P6 million ransom they demanded, police said.

Deputy Director General Oscar Calderon, chief of the Presidential Anti-Crime and Emergency Response, said police rescued the victim, whose identity is being withheld, from a motel located on the Gapan-Olongapo Highway in Lubao, Pampanga near midnight Wednesday.

The girl, accompanied by her mother, was presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo at the airport yesterday morning before Mrs Arroyo departed for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Busan, South Korea.

Working on leads provided by the girl's father, a rice dealer who investigated the alleged ransom trial from previous business dealings with him, police raided the suspects and eventually found their way to the motel where the girl was being held. Calderon said.

The alleged kidnappers, identified as Jose Bonito Manlangsan, 36, a Lubao rice mill operator, and Jimmy Abrenica, 25, a native of Negros Occidental, were arrested in the operation, Calderon said.

Calderon said the girl, who was neither bound nor gagged, was held in a room inside the Olivian Resort Inn but apparently not beaten but as the kidnappers had threatened to starve her to death if the P6 million ransom they demanded was not paid.

"The abductors were asking for a sizable ransom, but the family could not afford it, so they told the family they would just have to kill the girl slowly by not feeding her," a source close to the investigation said. "The mastermind would not give her food during the last three days."

Fortunately, the girl's caretaker could not stomach the cruelty and gave her a little food whenever the mastermind could, added the source who asked not to be identified for security reasons.

All is forgiven, but ...

AS THE 'MOST IN' MOMENTS appear one by one before the Senate to recount their stories on President Macapagal-Arroyo, Malacañang yesterday said the chief executive has already forgiven her former Cabinet members' "betrayal" and "conspiracy."

The President's forgiveness, however, comes with a parting shot as Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said that the Hyatt 10 members, who collectively resigned on July 8 and denounced that the President do the same, would be remembered as "fools and not heroes."

Bunye restated the Palace's harsh words for former Social Welfare and Development Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman whose testimony from the Senate car stirring the blades on the President's back.

"I am sad to say that as a former colleague in the Cabinet, Dinky Soliman is trying to portray herself as a martyr when she is deliberately not," Bunye said in a statement.

The Palace described Soliman as "one of the closest and most loyal to the President among her Cabinet colleagues." It charged that Soliman "was professing her full support for Ms Arroyo barely hours before the finishing announcement of the Hyatt 10 withdrawing their support for President." MEC
Culled from page A1

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 19, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

ALUMNO

Alumno ends RP gold drought in Indoor Games

By Jennifer M. Paya

PHUKET, THAILAND—HE CAME AND CONquered with little fanfare.

But Mily Alumno became the toast of the Philippine delegation when he topped the Wushu 60kg event overseas thus to win the country's first gold in the 1st Asian Indoor Games on Wednesday night at the Impossible Sports Complex here.

Alumno, who outclassed rivals from six countries, outshined Filipino Daniel Lasdan captured two bronze medals for the Philippines' 1st Olympic bids of the three to three sequestered categories in the Asian event.

Both lost their matches after earlier securing bronze medals by earning a bye to the semifinals.

The country's medal haul may initially present an disappointed, but the Filipino fans failed to notice how its winning extended along with its athlete's talent and sports-climbing to extreme sports.

"When we saw the medal standings, I told Daniel's dad we have to provide a medal for the Philippines," said Alumno. "But I wasn't too confident because this is more prestigious than the SEA Games. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are here, and they're the powerhouse of many fans."

Even for his teammates, Alumno delivered a flawless performance for a score of 80.8 points in the Wu Shu event.

The 24-year-old Alumno finished an impressive ahead of Iraqi Mohammad Aamen, who settled for silver after earning 79.8 points. Indian's Ali Akbar hit the bronze with 64 points.

Also known as many short, yet slight in stature, Pinoy fighter relishes in posters a series of

(SEE ALUMNO, A23)

Court orders POC to reinstate BAP

Decision offers little hope for SEA Games basketball

By Hanzley B. Corrillo

THE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION OF THE Philippines yesterday won a court battle against the Philippine Olympic Committee, but the decision may have come too late in the day for basketball to be included in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games.

Judge Manuel M. Barrios of Branch 54 of the RTC Regional Trial Court on Wednesday "reinstated" the POC immediately resolved to lift the ban on the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) from the local Olympic body and gave the go-ahead for the holding of the basketball tourney in the SEAG.

But BAP's court victory did not go unchallenged before a higher court, according to former Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) commissioner Emilio Gonzalez.

While only eight days to go before the biennial meet kicks off, an amount of legal maneuvering, observers say, can mean confusion in the SEAG calendar of events.

"It is not final and executory. Clearly [the] decision rendered on the court decision. The POC can easily take the matter to a higher court and, considering the time element, that decision may have come a little too late."

Gonzalez added that "the POC can go up to the appellate court and ask for [the] the court [RTC] merely abused its discretion in granting the injunction and that it has no legal basis."

The POC had earlier expelled the BAP through an overwhelming vote by the national sports association for the 31st International basketball

(SEE COURT, A23)

Fertilizer probe opens more cans of worms

From page A1

Asked by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon if the Presidential hears about the omission, Bonoan said: "Yes, I would imagine so."

Bonoan was invited to a Senate hearing on Oct. 27, but he left the country hours before the hearing began.

Bonoan said she had assumed that the President knew about the controversial fund release.

Akorn Marketing

Antonio Inda, Enrile's Senate assistant personal treasurer, told the Senate committee that the province disbursed a total of ₱6.5 million to Akorn Marketing in connection to April 2004 for 6,268 bags of fertilizer, but the province did not receive the fertilizer.

BOLANTE

BONCODIN

Inda said principal agriculturist officer Jesus Agda confided to him that the province did not receive the fertilizers although Thomas Concepcion, a representative of the Provincial Financial Services Office, claimed that the chief of staff of Governor Eimor Bolante, Marcelino Libanan and Gov. Clotilde Bolante had received them.

"We spoke with Mr. Agda and found out that there were no actual deliveries of fertilizer or implements to the provincial government and he, thereafter, issued a certification to that effect dated June 7, 2004," Inda said in his sworn affidavit.

"I was surprised to know this because, contrary to Mr. Agda's certification, [Congressman] declared in the inspection report dated April 14, 2004, that 2,268 packs of fertilizer were accepted by province Thomas Tanjuco Libanan's chief of staff], were inspected, verified and found okay as to quantity and specifications," he said.

Inda said another inspection made by Congressman on April 19, 2004, indicated that 2,268 bags were accepted by Bolante on April 19, 2004.

Ghost deliveries

The assistant treasurer said he learned about the alleged ghost deliveries when he personally made inquiries after some people asked in June 2004 about the bags of fertilizer "which were supposed to be delivered to the province and availed of by the farmers."

"I assumed for so long to be safe this body so that our people and the country would know about these anomalies," he told the committee.

Inda insisted that no fertilizer was delivered, adding that Congressman's office was near he office and he would have known if any deliveries were made.

Aling Sinang Gulayan

Inda also pointed out that a regional newspaper discovered that the phone number on the receipt of Akorn Marketing belonged to a respectable store in Caloocan.

"The said store is in fact Aling Sinang Gulayan and does not distribute fertilizer and (a representative of the store) further stated that the store has been receiving a lot of calls asking if the store is Akorn Marketing," he said.

Inda said that a certain Kevin Obed apostol personally recalled the second disbursement to Akorn.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, agriculture committee chair, said the committee would subpoena Apostol.

Let truth come out

Alfonso Espino, president of the Eastern Samar Irrigators Federation, backed Inda's claims, telling the senators that personnel agricultural officer Agda had also told him that not a single bag of fertilizer was delivered to the province.

"I categorically state and confirm that no member of our organization received any fertilizer or farm input since Governor the Irrigators Federation president of Eastern Samar in 2001 up to the present," Espino said.

Espino said farmers in the province had even planned to get a truckload (ten) needed money for fertilizer.

"I should know if the farmers got the fertilizers because they were approaching me and asking 'Where are the fertilizers?'" he said.

Next hearing

Magsaysay said he hoped Bolante and former Agriculture Secretary Cito Lorenzo, who fled both gone abroad, would appear at the next Senate hearing on the fertilizer-scam next week.

Former Solicitor General Frank Chavez urged the committee to immediately serve the summons on Bolante who, he said, had reportedly returned to the country.

Former Education Secretary Florencio Abad also denied that Bolantes had received PP million in fertilizer funds, although he was named a proponent for the program by Bolante when Abad was a congressman.

Bird flu, terrorism, poverty…

From page A1

Leaders Meeting in Busan, South Korea. Pero, idem Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday.

Ms Arroyo said she would seek stronger cooperation with Asia-Pacific nations at the 21-member Apec forum, which she is scheduled to attend today and tomorrow.

"This trip to Apec is another important step to invest in the economic, social and physical security of our nation," Ms Arroyo said in a pre-departure speech in Hwaseong.

She said the Philippines' topic is a "best" delegation that includes Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, Trade Secretary Rizo Parlin and Presidential Chief Legal Counsel Mercedes Gutierrez.

Ms Arroyo is arranging a "pull aside" dialogue with United States President George W. Bush to discuss, possibly among key issues, the case of a young Filipino woman by six American soldiers in Subic, according to foreign Undersecretary for International Trade Services Ma. Luisa Lagdameo.

The brief but hopefully significant encounter would come during a break in the eight schedule of the Apec meeting.

Bush's scheduled one-hour meeting with the "Asian" leaders include Mr Arroyo at 9:25 a.m. today might provide an opening for the informal dialogue between the two leaders, said Jose Buyag, Jr., vice consul and third secretary of the Philippine Embassy in South Korea.

"But there are other events like dinners but, chosen and the photo opportunity," he told reporters at a press briefing in Seoul.

Lack of antiflu drugs

In her pre-departure speech, Ms Arroyo said she would discuss with Apec leaders the measures that the Philippine government had been taking to prepare for any outbreak of the deadly virus.

The Philippines remains free of the H5N1 virus, which has killed more than 60 people to date since 2003. Almost all of those who died had been in close contact with infected birds.

Health experts fear mutations in the people could the spread the world if the virus mutates in the point where it could spread easily from person to person.

Ms Arroyo said she intended to talk to Apec leaders about the lack of antiflu drugs in Asia and the need to have enough stocks of them.

"And upon my return I'll be working with the Cabinet to put final touches on our own comprehensive avian flu prevention program," she said.

The President also said she intended to ask Congress to provide additional funding "to fully prepare the nation in case of an outbreak of avian flu."

She said funding for this program would be taken from the P17 billion in savings that the government gained from its debt service.

3 approaches vs terror

On the fight against terrorism, she said that having been made head of the Apec task force against terrorism since last year, the country had "rallied Apec nations to strengthen our cooperation in the global fight against terrorism."

At home, Ms Arroyo enumerated the three approaches her administration had adopted to protect the country.

- Sharing intelligence with allies, raising of troops and engaging in regional coordination.
- Bringing peace to areas like Mindanao "so they can separate those who seek peace and prosperity from those who seek war and degradation."
- Tackling terrorism through eradication of poverty.

She had asked Congress to pass an antiterror law.

To fight poverty, the President said she would reiterate at the Apec meeting Manila's proposal to the United Nations for a "large movement of debt for the Millennium Development Goals Financing Program."

Inflexible

Controller was not optimistic that Ms Arroyo would have another long conversation with Bush at this year's Apec like they had during a recent gathering at The United Nations where they were seated beside each other.

Such an opportunity was not likely to happen this time, considering the "inflexible" arrangements made by Busan organizers for both the first and second retreats of the economic leaders, Custodio said.

Ms Arroyo will be seated between her Russian and Chinese counterparts at the table to the left wing, Bush will be positioned between Thailand and Vietnam to his middle table.

Ms Arroyo's June bilateral talks in Busan will be with South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun, who is scheduled for a state visit to the Philippines on June 14-16, according to Datuyag.

The formal dialogue will cover an economic partnership between Manila and Seoul, including the possible signing of the Filipino free trade agreement and relations with Korea consolidating that it is the world's 11th largest economy," Custodio said.

ELECTRIC SERVICE IN THESE AREAS WILL BE MOMENTARILY INTERRUPTED FOR FACILITIES UPGRADING AND OTHER LINE WORK.

MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

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Unkempt garden …

From page A1

before her departure for South Korea for the 13th Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) meeting.

Aboard by after holding a pre-departure press briefing in Bhutan-ganang's Blue Room, President Arroyo was seen fuming in the back hallway of Malacañan Hall, which covers by underwear a multi-million-peso makeover into a "unkempt garden."

The President's famous temper flared up when she saw the patchy and lifeless Bermuda grass as well as the green rest that covered the 120-acre canvas in the Malacañan hall garden.

She asked loudly why the plants had not been watered and pruned in one of the oldest buildings in the Palace complex.

The President, surrounded by security aides, also fulminated at the lack of toilet paper in the restrooms which she passed on her way back to her office.

In a terse, interrogatory, the President sometimes walks around the Palace to inspect her office and evidence has she rarely put upon—isn't it working?

Imelda-style beautification

Buying a Cabinet meeting two weeks ago, the President announced she was taking a personal interest in the massive beautification of the historic edifice related to Imelda Marcos' falsely-named Sunshine campaigns.

"He give you an idea how much time the President is, she wants all roads from the airport to Edsa to Quezon to Roxas Boulevard to look in look good," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Ermita said the President was "very particular" about the beautification of the city.

"It might not be rich but we always want to show our facilities as their best when visitors come," he said.

It was said the urban beautification will cost P100 million, would cover "unsightly places along rail tracks where informal settlers would be asked to beautify their places of residence."

It was said that this was part of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's bid to improve the environment to attract more investors and tourists dubbed "Work na habab pulang tapusyong pagpapaki," "service-oriented means to a metropolis.

Rebranding the capital

The President smashed her plan to refurbish Metro Manila's highways and streets, including rebranding the metropolis simply as Manila—"a metropolis compared to Bangkok or Hong Kong."

"The reason that investors pass off to Singapore, Malaysia instead of whether they should be investing in the Philippines, the reason from airports in hotels, from Makati-king to Cubaohuan, there are the primary areas for investments," said Gen Dilog.

The President told an entrepreneurship forum.

Not only does the President want the tourists to see a beautiful, well-groomed and clean capital, but inside the Palaces the tourists would meet at the airport…from security to customs to tourism officials—to be courteous and friendly.

"We are known for our hospitality and our President wants to review the program of showing our best to our visitors," Ermita said.

Blood, sweat …

From page A1

Sister Ayr Briones, one of the four interpersonals in the group, pointing to a dent, two inches in size. He might think that he got from the thumb edge of the stage's staircase.

The 24-year-old hip-hop dance teacher slapped dust bags on the second, and hoped that the blood would not seep through. He then drew up his white pants as he arms through his numbers.

A pulled thigh muscle is common to dancers, but not throughout the opening night of the stage's matinee.

The 24-year-old hip-hop dance teacher slapped dust bags on the second, and hoped that the blood would not seep through. He then drew up his white pants as he arms through his numbers.

A pulled thigh muscle is common to dancers, but not throughout the opening night of the stage's matinee.

Gabriel grimaced each time he landed hard on his right leg, but he must not to dwell on the pain and move on with his choreography and high kicks.

"The show must go on," he said.

At the time of the Inquirer's visit, it is September, almost all of the 15-member dance troupe were nursing sprained bruises and sprained ankles.

It's inevitable as they skip a wing or two of the steep staircase that they negotiate to get backstage for lightning-fast costume changes, often in high heels and flowing dresses.

And they say up that staircase about 24 times through the three shows daily that they put on 20 days a month.

They get only two days off a month under the six-month contract.

Grief and longing

The pain is apparently not just physical.

Gabriel was crying himself to deep because he was grieving over the death of his mother. If he had called her home from Hong Kong that he would see her alive. But he was very days late, and he could not forgive himself.)

Briones was surely missing his wife and their 4-year-old daughter, and was seen on his cellphone to see photo calls and looking at their pictures. (It was pasted on the bottom of the top bunk of the double-deck bed.)

"Pain is the norm in japan. It's difficult and lonely, but can be fun at the same time," said Adji Amarilla, a former ballet scholar of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, who has been working in Japan for 17 years.

They must also go to great lengths to take care of their bodies. For years of them, bleaches, liposuction, tummy tucks, nose jobs and silicone implants to augment are par for the course.

A day in the life

But keeping away from the sun's damaging rays is no problem.

The "day" starts at about 4 p.m., when the four or five dancers sharing an apartment rise awake from their sound four to five hour sleep and take turns in the shower.

"very particular" about the beautification of the city.

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Professionals, not Japayuki

And yes, there are the few clubs that hunt for prostitutes done, as well as the prevailing belief that all Filipino entertainers in Japan double as prostitutes.

Hosting themselves called "japayuki" never fails to raise the hackles of entertainers like those at Yen Bars, who are working in Japan with years of experience in ballet and jazz behind them.

"We are professionals," said Amarilla. "We should be treated with respect." Conclusion: Business is thriving

Jailed Iranian is press freedom awardee

ABRAR GANJI, a leading Rhesalgative journalist who is now one of Iran's most renowned political prisoners, has been awarded the 2006 Golden Pen of Freedom, the annual press freedom prize of the World Association of Newspapers.

Ganji, who is serving the fourth year of a six-year prison sentence, is the author of the book "Dungeons of Ghosts," in which he implicates the former president, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, and other leading conservative figures in the murders of five writers and intellectuals in 1998. The book is said to have been a major factor in the conservative defeat in parliamentary elections of February 2000.

Ganji has reportedly been tortured in prison and has gone on two long hunger strikes. He has definitely refused to renounce his critique of the state, even if it could win his release. In a letter to covertly-smuggled out of prison, he wrote: "Let it be known that if learning my lessons is tantamount to my previous opinions, Ganji will never learn his lesson."

He was arrested in April 2000 following his participation in a Berlin conference to which political and social reformers in Iran were publicly declared. He was sentenced to six years in prison in 2001 for "disseminating religious reform and figures, threatening national security and disseminating propaganda against the Islamic system."

The Golden Pen award, which will be presented on June 5, 2006, at the World Newspaper Congress and World Editors Forum in Moscow, Russia, recognizes Ganji's outstanding defense and promotion of press freedom.

"After Ganji fights for freedom of expression in Iran has hit efforts are watched around the globe," said the Board of the Paris-based IWAN, meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark. "His unbelievable resistance to repression and his steadfast refusal to be silenced, at great personal cost, is an inspiration to journalists everywhere. It is through courageous journalists who do not capitulate – even in the face of long prison terms and even death – that freedom advances."

This time, Mapua classmates want Erap in reunion

THIS TIME IT'S THE MAPUA INSTITUTE OF Technology high school classmates of deposed President Estrada desiring his presence at their class reunion.

The MITH Alumni Association has written to the Sandiganbayan Special Division asking that the detained ex-president be allowed to attend their homecoming on Nov. 10 at the Manila Pavilion Hotel.

In a letter dated Nov. 7, the association president, lawyer Mona Lisa Buencamino, said that aside from receiving his golden jubilarian award, Estrada will be the homecoming guest speaker.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio reminded only opposed the request and urged the court to deny the petition, as it did on earlier request of Estrada's former classmates at the Ateneo de Manila high school department.

Estrada transferred to the Mapua Institute of Technology High School (MITH) after he was expelled from Ateneo for bonding. But the Ateneo High School's Class of 1952 apparently still considers the disgraced leader a member of their batch.

The Special Division last Monday rejected Estrada's motion seeking permission to attend a golden jubilee celebration com ort of his Ateneo high school class, which was held the following day at the Meralco Theater in Ortig.

In rejecting Estrada's motion, the Special Division said the golden jubilee did not appear to be an occasion that was important enough to justify the considerable expense that the government would incur to safeguard Estrada's safety and security.

"The Court finds no imperative humanitarian consideration or even honored Filipino custom or tradition, which can constrain the Court to grant the motion," it added.

Villa-Ignacio manual added the state's concern stated to the organizers of the Mapua homecoming to visit Estrada at his detention cell house in Tanay, Rizal where he could give his message to his fellow alumni. The organizers said their personally hand Estrada his award, the state prosecutor said.

Inquirer News

Walking Time Bombs, Defused.

Thanks To Bariatric Surgery, Clayton And Iree Now Have A New Lease On Life.

OBESITY IS BAD NEWS. Morbid Obesity is pretty much a death sentence.

And Clayton was on Death Row. At 381 pounds, he had it all: diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, bone and joint disease, reflux, even sleep apnea. His sister Iree wasn't much better, weighing in at an impressive 310 pounds.

Because of his incredible bulk, simple things like crossing the street and self-bathing were impossible. Despite repeated visits at diet and exercise, nothing was working. Clayton, and Iree, needed help, fast.

The UST Hospital's extensive gastric bypass or bariatric surgery expertise was the solution. By shrinking the distal stomach, restricting the gastric reservoir's size and reducing an aversion to sweets coupled with the patient's active cooperation, good results happen.

It worked. Thanks to Clayton's determination, today he is nearly half the man he used to be: 230 pounds, and counting. Iree has lost a whopping hundred pounds, or so. More importantly, their lives have changed beyond recognition, happier than words can describe, and safe from serious health risks.

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The WORLD

Lira Lorenzo B. Suico

US admits using phosphorous in Iraq

WASHINGTON—THE PENTAGON ON WEDNESday acknowledged using incendiary white phosphorous munitions in a 2004 offensive against insurgents in the Iraqi city of Fallujah and defended their use as legal, amid concerns by arms control advocates.

Army Lt. Gen. Barry Bentzle, a Pentagon spokesperson, said the US military had not used the highly flammable weapons against civilians, contrary to an Italian news television report this month that stated the munitions were used against men, women and children in Fallujah who were burned to the bone.

"We categorically deny that claim," Bentzle said.

"It's part of our conventional weapons inventory and we use it like any one of our conventional weapons," added Brian Whitman, another Pentagon spokesperson.

Whitman said white phosphorous weapons are not outlawed or banned by any convention.

However, a spokesman for an accord on conventional weapons which took effect in 2000 forbids using incendiary weapons against civilians.

The protocol also forbids their use against military targets within concentrations of civilians, except when the targets are clearly separated from civilians and "all feasible precautions" are taken to avoid civilian casualties.

The United States is a party to the overall accord, but has not ratified the incendiary-weapons protocol or another involving blinding laser weapons.

White phosphorous munitions are primarily used by the US military to make smoke screens and mark targets, but also as an incendiary weapon, the Pentagon said. They are not considered chemical weapons. The substance ignites easily in air at temperatures of about 86 degrees F (30 C), and in fire can be difficult to extinguish.

Beryl Kimball, executive director of the Washington-based Arms Control Association, questioned whether the US military was using the weapons in a manner consistent with the accord behind weapons convention.

"When phosphorous weapons should not be used just like any other conventional weapon," Kimball said.

Kimball called for an independent review of how the United States was using the weapons and possibly an investigation by countries that are parties to the convention "to determine whether their use in Iraq is appropriate or not." Reuters

US deaths mount in Iraq as public swings against war

BAGHDAD—THE US MILITARY ON THURSDAY announced the death of a 26 soldier killed in Iraq, the 13th servicemen to die in one days at a time when US opinion is turning against the war.

The latest victim, who died Wednesday of wounds sustained in a Baghdad bomb explosion, brings to at least 2,060 the number of US military personnel killed in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion, according to an AFP tally based on the independent Iraq Coalition Casualty Count.

Five Marines also died Wednesday in a helicopter in Diyala near the Syrian border in western Iraq, the military said.

The New York Times newspaper, which has a correspondent with troops in the area, said 11 Marines were also wounded in the clash which erupted after they were caught in an ambush on a farm on the outskirts of the town.

Meanwhile, a USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll released Wednesday said 54 percent of Americans want US troops withdrawn from Iraq within the next 12 months.

In 1970, a pivotal year in which sentiment swung against the Vietnam war, a similar number wanted US troops withdrawn from that country, USA Today noted.

President George Bush's administration, facing growing pressure over the war, has launched a counteroffensive against critics who say it manipulated prewar intelligence to win support for the Iraq invasion, challenging both opposition Democrats and the press.

"I expect them to be critical, but when Democrats say that I deliberately misled the congress and the people, that's irresponsible," Bush said Thursday during a visit to Kuwait.

Bush took the lead in the campaign in a Nov. 11 speech when he branded Iraq's enemies as "terrorists pure and simple" after having called on the government to declare a timetable to withdraw US troops from Iraq.

But his administration was dealt a setback Tuesday when Democrats and Republicans in the Senate supported an amendment to require the president to make regular progress reports on the war, just a year ahead of elections that could weaken Republican control of Congress.

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld Tuesday warned against a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq, where US casualties are now, by number just over 150,000.

The United States wants to hand over responsibility to Iraqis as soon as possible and leave, Rumsfeld said.

"But not in a manner that is precipitous, not in a manner that would inject instability into the situation, and not in a manner that would suggest to a terrorist that all he has to do is wait us out," he added.

"Because if they have their way to impose their misdirected vision on that country in that part of the world there would be no end to the price to pay," he added. AFP

Iraq said US forces will draw down as Iraqi security forces build up.

WHO: Bird flu not passing from human to human in China

BEIJING—THE WORLD HEALTH Organization said Thursday it sees no sign bird flu is being spurred from person to person after China reported its first cases of human infection.

"There is not any evidence for human transmission so far," said Hervé Bekedam, the WHO representative in China. "If there would be something like that, we would expect more people around the same area to develop symptoms."

The health ministry on Wednesday reported China's first human cases of bird flu. It said there were two confirmed cases—a 29-year-old woman who died and a 9-year-old boy who recovered. It said the boy's 12-year-old sister, who died, was a suspected case.

The WHO had the virus has killed at least 66 people in Asia since 2003 and experts have warned that it could mutate into a form that can easily spread between people. Millions could die in a pandemic.

Asked whether there was any sign that China was being silent on details, Bekedam said, "If there's evidence of human-to-human transmission, there will be small clusters. We are not at that stage."

But he warned of the need to be vigilant.

"We need to closely monitor the virus," Bekedam said. "The key is that at a certain moment, there will be changes, that we will be able to detect it early."

Tom moves among surveillance systems and quick responses, he said. "That's also a challenge not only for China, but a challenge for the whole world," he said.

China denied that it was covering up any human cases of bird flu, following heavy criticism of its slaughtering of ill-responding to outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome—or SARS—which emerged in 2002.

"The Chinese government has taken a very responsible attitude," said foreign ministry spokesperson Liu Jianchao. "It is not necessary for us to cover up." AP

CIA says Fidel Castro has Parkinson's disease

WASHINGTON — THE CIA HAS concluded that Cuban President Fidel Castro is suffering from the disease's slowest and mildest form, [illegible] coping with the duties of office for the foreseeable future, an official said Wednesday.

The assessment, completed in recent months, supports the rumored but debilitating disease that prevented the strongman from [illegible] speeches [illegible] public appearances about the communist country's future.

"The assessment is that he has the disease and that his condition has progressed. There appear to be many outward signs," said an official familiar with the assessment.

Both administration officials and members of Congress have been briefed on the findings about Castro. The Cuban leader, 75, has been in power on the island for 42 years. He [illegible] 1959 revolution and has long been at [illegible] with Washington.

But [illegible] played down the significance of the CIA assessment and said they were not using such intelligence to make policy decisions about Castro or Cuba.

"Do we use him for [illegible] the guy over the country? No," said a Republican official, who asked not to be named because he was discussing intelligence conclusions. "My answer is we use everything we can get our hands on to try to understand what we're dealing with."

The CIA based its assessment on a variety of evidence, including observations of Castro's public appearances and the opinions of doctors employed by the espionage agency.

"If the assessment is correct, you could expect Castro to be affected in his ability to come to grips with Cuba's challenges over the next several years," said the CIA official who first gave the CIA report. He spoke on condition of anonymity because the assessment is classified.

Castro [illegible] disclosed in [illegible] that he suffered from Parkinson's.

The CIA declined to comment on the CIA assessment.

The general Castro was ordered [illegible] to show up at a summit of Ibero-American leaders in Spain's October.

Castro has long been the subject of rumors of illnesses, including Parkinson's, despite a generally strong physical constitution.

Reuters

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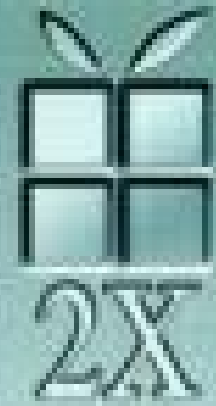

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Woodward says Bush official leaked Plame's position to him 2 years ago

WASHINGTON—THE CIA LEAK probe on Wednesday renewed Washington Post journalist Bob Woodward, who disclosed that he was told about CIA operative Valerie Plame nearly a month before two senior Bush administration officials revealed her identity to the public.

The disclosure that Woodward, who has written several books on the Bush presidency, gave a sworn deposition on Monday to special prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald comes more than two weeks after the indictment and resignation of Vice President Dick Cheney's chief of staff, Lewis "Scooter" Libby, and after Fitzgerald said he took off his gloves in the case.

In his testimony to Fitzgerald, Woodward said he revealed earlier such that a senior Bush administration official casually told him in mid-June 2003 about Plame's position at the CIA.

That appeared to contradict Fitzgerald's comments that Libby was the first official to leak information to reporters.

The testimony was a sign prosecutors are exploring new leads in the investigation that has shocked the top levels of the White House. It also prompted the Post's executive editor to publicly chastise one of the best-known journalists in the United States for withholding the information from his editors.

One of the two Post reporters who had the newspaper's coverage of the CIA's Washington handed Time Magazine's Matthew Cooper a memo that Woodward had discussed the leak in investigators where she and seven appearances in front of the grand jury, Woodward said he told Fitzgerald on "a privileged day."

On the eve of Libby's indictment, Woodward said he saw no evidence of criminal intent, neither disclosing his earlier conversations with Libby and others.

Woodward wrote in a Post account on Sunday that he met with Libby on June 27, 2003, and told Fitzgerald it was possible Plame was discussed. But Woodward testified, "I had no sense or recollection of Libby as" [illegible]

DATE 11-19-2010 INQUIRER VOL. XXVIII, NO. 347

OPINION

Text us your feedback: inquirer.opinion@gmail.com

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Little brown brother

Editorial

WHAT'S WRONG WITH JUSTICE SECRETARY Raul Gonzalez handing over American service man accused of rape in the custody of US authorities? Isn't that what the Visiting Forces Agreement very clearly stipulates in this case? Katrina Legarda, the lawyer of the victim, says quite a lot is wrong with it. And it begins—get this—with a phone call.

According to Legarda, Gonzalez responded quickly to a phone call from a US Embassy official early on Nov. 2, by making a phone call directing the Olongapo City prosecutor to transfer lately from the suspects to American custody. Because of this, Legarda says, government prosecutors were deprived of the opportunity to conduct a thorough investigation close to the date of the crime. And the police weren't given a chance to arrest the servicemen.

As things stand now, Legarda says, the Subic rape case promises to be more difficult to prosecute than the rape case against then Rep. Romeo Jalosjos. That case took 453 days from arraignment to sentencing. The VFA notes that if a case is not decided with one calendar year, the United States is freed of all its obligations under the agreement.

Another lawyer, Edwin Lacierda, who teaches Constitutional Law at Far Eastern University, has enumerated the possible legal tactics that the US servicemen's defense could resort to, and the time such tactics could use up. Consider the numbers: 60 days for a preliminary investigation. Then 15 days for a period of appeal to the Department of Justice, and 60 days for the DOJ to resolve the appeal. An additional 30 days may be needed to resolve a motion to quash. Add another 30 days for a motion for reconsideration to be decided. That's a total of 255 days before the case finally reaches the point when the accused can be arraigned.

Once the arraignment takes place, the pre-trial would commence in 30 days. After the pre-trial, a period of 30 days must pass from the receipt of the pre-trial order before the case can be set for trial. By this time, 315 days will have elapsed, leaving just 50 days for the actual trial, including the presentation of witnesses for both sides and deciding the verdict. But even this slender timeframe doesn't leave room for other delaying tactics the defense might employ.

Legarda has sensible grounds, has already requested the transfer of the preliminary investigation from Olongapo City to Manila. She says there have been too many cases when local authorities showed too much leniency toward Asian hosts accused of a similar crime.

But with a language "the circumstances are different there," Gonzalez has denied Legarda's request (apparently without even having read her letter). He'd rather that Olongapo officials go through the motions of making an investigation, regardless of what the defense can claim as a deficient track record and without taking into account the fact certain circumstances could either compromise the case or place its outcome in doubt. All of which can only contribute to the perception that the Philippine government is not to do the American government a favor.

At the moment, there is no case before the courts. Accusations have been made, and they need to be investigated. Olongapo City officials might protest vehemently that the accusations of their being soft on Americans accused of wrongdoing are malicious. Maybe. But this country cannot afford to have anything happen that will cast doubt on the resolve of the government to pursue this case until justice is done.

What's wrong with Gonzalez's behavior is that it is not the job of a Philippine official to respond in an extremely prompt manner to American phone calls, but rather to take his time to make sure the correct procedures are followed and all legal requirements are attended to. He should be moving, not with indecent haste but with deliberate speed, to assure his primary constituency—his countrymen—that justice is being done, while ensuring the Americans that the law as the Arroyo administration's defenders have so often argued, "may be harsh, but it is the law."

To jump quickly to one's feet and dial the phone the moment Americans come knocking is to make oneself a little brown brother, an obligating lackey of the United States.

'Garci' cannot be closed unless. . .

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

READING LAST TUESDAY'S NEWSPAPERS made me surprised about some of the Garci case defenders. Representative Secretary Michael Defensor called "Letts Make" and "Let's Defense" (misleading opposite advice for her to hurt other side) Commissioner Virgilio de Guia (who's he to hurt other side?). Is Letts Make the secretary of executive secretary and natural resources or the Garci spokesman and media man? Did the attack of hypertension that Gonzalez suffered when he would not see reason or defend herself? Why? Are those other defenders afraid to be hurt?

Returning to the statement of Archbishop Jesus Legaspi, incoming head of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), that there should be a "closure" to the "Hello Garci" scandal, Letts Make said "It is already closed," and Gonzalez said the "Hello Garci" tapes are "insignificant."

Insignificant? But the voice of all the gods from Ati-Atihan and "that other Gonzalez" says it is "insignificant"? The tape caught in the tape showing with Garci to cheat in the 2004 elections and made 40 percent of the Filipino conclude that that did not win in the polls, the result the president herself proclaimed. Poe Jr. and therefore she is a bogus president. That is why the people are angrily marching in the streets and willing her to step down.

Closed? How can it be closed when it is this closed? Even the comic strip making just-smiling like hell? An honest canvassing of votes in Congress could have closed it, but the Garci allies there prevented that. The conclusion of the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee that Garci used "leftover" could have closed it, but 9/11 decision of the Supreme Court threw out the subpoena power of his widow Neneng Perez. The impeachment complaint could have closed it, but the House blocked that, too. Are Garci allies blocked all avenues for the decision to have no choice but to close?

There can be no closure and no peace for the Arroyo administration until it is clear that the really won the presidency "late and wrong" with which to buffer the weaponization of the military and the police and to control the courts, as later she attempted to do with the Supreme Court. Only then can she be free to go to bed with

Forest fire in Samar

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE ADMINISTRATION IS MOVING A BLITZkrieg whirlwind campaign to get its decision rolling on 10-year moratorium on logging in the protected forest preserves on Samar island, giving first Juan Ponce Enrile's San Miguel Timber Corp. title to about 60,000 hectares of the 333,300-hectare Samar Island Natural Park.

The decision issued on Aug. 16 ignited a political furore like, with some political embellishment than the conflicts of Samar, where an ad hoc grass-roots coalition of outraged citizens, environmentalists, religious and Catholic Church pastors has mounted a protest movement calling on Environment Secretary Michael Defensor to rescind his Aug. 16 order.

Although Malacañang is distant from the center of the storm in Samar, where

An example for people in gov't

LETTERS

AS AN OBSERVANT CITIZEN OF this country, without any political temperament, I must admit that to be given an audience by Manuel Morato, PCSO chairman, was such a humbling experience on my part. Everyone in his office was very courteous and very helpful. This is far from what we had last year and invoked me to cry unjustly. It made me wish that all government agencies, under the Office of the President, bring in executives of the most powerful office in the land, were that way.

While waiting for Morato, who was in a board meeting last Oct. 31, I was in the company of our two hyperactive brother and sister Filipinos who had traveled from far away places to seek assistance from the PCSO. A man from Naga was beside me (and true it doesn't pamandayanan with an excited photo of his son who was affiliated with a cancer in his left eye. He was asking for medical assistance. Ms. Irene was handwritten and that was understandable, knowing that he had no typewriter or computer because this was a poor family. In his letter was a stamped note signed by Morato who asked a department to give assistance to the poor fellow.

My reason for seeking an audience with Morato was not for medical assistance. I was there only to seek a recommendation of my application to be an extra lane lottery agent.

However, after one an early agency citizen do? After listening to my cool arguments, so to speak, the good-natured executive told me that he had no power to grant such authority as he was not the PCSO chairman. Nevertheless, he endorsed my letter to Gonzalo Zabella, assistant general manager for online lottery. The fate of my application awaits final judgment by the lawyer.

In this age of incredible ex-

cesses and arrogance by some of President Macapagal-Arroyo's men, saying public officials of Morato's kind with an even nice touch me, but there was still hope. Morato's mission for the poor and his giving time for ordinary citizens should be an example to those people who hold power in government.

—ROMULO D. PESA,
23113 E. del Prado St.,
San Ana, Manila

Looking ahead

Pro and con letters to the INQ7.net editor are increasingly of quality a balance to the country's ills that is genuinely re-

THE VOTES FOR GMA THAT MAY HAVE been (allegedly) bought (bearing no significance, hopefully to) women deputies of the years of the majority. The number who may have been (allegedly) bought is still a mystery.—Anna Liza Maza, Secretary General Gabriela, Houston, Texas

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

I believe GMA cheated in the last election. When are we watching the younger generation, who (hearing is normal and in fact is rewarded by becoming president of the country)? What will become of our young people when they build more power positions in the country?—Ronald Ivan Belloy, 117 Mandaluyong St., GF Caloocan City

PGBM is not the only leader in this country. There are other leaders who have been doing well in their respective offices. Why do we have to speak ill of our political enemies, our previous mistakes? Why can't we have a more positive, responsible outlook? Let her own conscience disturb and judge her about what she has done to this country and, above all, to the poor.—Edmund Gondolfon, New Jersey USA

Isn't being arrogant than fiction, the Philippines manages to do it both to more degrees, degrees (again and again) who tell people of their dignity and livelihood, preaching instead the piety and wisdom who are jealous of raping power. Please, it remands those who are bold in claim who perpetuate the culture of corruption, and silences...no, kills...crusaders of truth and justice. In a twisted spin, those who gain, toss the names (are branded) dreadfully...no, not positively, or even neutral...

and only the names raise.

Quote has reached conscious, judged and condemned the Philippines to a doom of hell and hell for decent citizens! (Booing Mr. Garter has many tools [to] and I will (not) let the president to the doctor [unbroken] and (no) poor persecuted country, the real enemy is then in our (their) enemies, the multibillionaires of greed and power will continue to run through our daily (in) squares to feed our family.

And who are we most a dedicated (enemy)? (we) look at (them)?

3. Hello Garci, sabi demokrasya—this only does the controversial former electoral commissioner scream booing, as it is the same voice heard by legislators in Washington, DC 464 great office governments of friends, of (than or enemies) from appearing in Congress (where presidential appeared).

2. Calibrated freedom—The law on protect rallies continues, announced by the banding of heads of prosecutors.

3. Muzzling the press—The most troubling is the strong opposition (opinion of 16-4/4 in league) (joining) the House of Telecommunications Commission under "the administrative supervision and control" of the DOTC... Lourdes Maybituin, 6 Fifth Avenue, Cubao, Quezon (which TV or radio station go to broadcast (a) not. Indeed, he can detain how can anyone still phones. Controlling [one] the country in the guise of protecting the citizens from pornographers is our dictatorship as well.

4. Charter change and the Unholy Trio of (GO) PVN and GMA—They relieve of our right to vote and seal the fate of our country by a parliament (that) gave for power and riches, usurping our constitutional democracy and installing dictatorship and [our] system of (bad) democracy.—Bel Sacramento, dumaresacampo@Yahoo.com

Across the NATION

DENR exec won't shut down Lafayette

By Blandie Rivera

LEGAZPI CITY—A REGIONAL environment official yesterday continued to defend a mining firm that had leaked toxic waste into the waters of Bagu-ragu, Albay, saying its operations won't be shut because it committed only one violation—failure to contain excess effluents that led to the breaching of its tailings pond.

Bernardo Ayan, Mines and Geosciences Bureau regional director, said while his office understood calls for the closure of Lafayette Philippines Inc.'s operations in the province, he saw no reason to shut them down.

He said the MGB will base its decision on its findings, and on the protests and growing clamor to shut down Lafayette.

But he told reporters at the DENR that his office found the rehabilitation plan submitted by Lafayette to be inadequate.

"We find it inadequate. We have a lot of reservations on their plan," he said.

The MGB is also seeking a review of the entire tailings disposal system of Lafayette to check if it was faithful to the DENR plan.

Ayan said the study submitted by Lafayette says "theoretically okay" that it was possible the actual set-up in the plant was different.

The clean water run-off drainage, for example, passed through the tailings pond, which should not be the case because this would naturally cause the pond to overflow during heavy rains, the MGB said.

The DNR has also suspended the entire dredging permit it issued to Lafayette, doubling the company from using its tailings ponds.

No cyanide

Lafayette was also prohibited from buying cyanide pending the rehabilitation process.

These prohibitions could delay Lafayette's scheduled shift to base metals production from gold production because it could not use its tailings ponds or cyanide during the rehabilitation process.

The long-term rehabilitation could take around three months, Ayan said. Lafayette's gold processing has been indefinitely suspended by the MGB.

The Bagu-Bagu Polymetallic Project, dubbed as the flagship project of Oas county's revived mining industry, was responsible for two mine spills in the last month, causing fish kills and cyanide contamination of Oas barangay creeks, Hollowcome and Dapao.

A defective valve channeled mine tailings to the swamp pond instead of the tailings pond, causing the worst pollution incident on Oct. 11. Three weeks later, heavy rains caused the tailings pond to overflow on Oct. 31, according to official MGB reports.

"They said they did not loosen the amount of rainwater, but we don't find that as an excuse," Ayan said.

The MGB has directed Lafayette to do an immediate physical cleanup of the shorelines and demand the environment goods to ensure that the effluent released would meet DENR standards. With a report from Gil Pimentel Arevalo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mayor convicted of graft

PAGADIAN CITY—A Zamboanga del Sur town mayor could serve up to 30 years in prison while three other town officials have been given prison terms after the Sandiganbayan found them guilty of graft.

A copy of the graft court's July 20 decision was obtained by the tribunal's archive today.

The case against Labangal Mayor Cesar Sebastian, Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator (MPDC) Arsa Hadrijal, Municipal Treasurer Eduardo Celeste and Operation Officer Victor Aparici stemmed from an alleged overpayment of three state aid for the purchase of construction materials for seven shallow water deep well projects in the town in 2004.

It was prompted by a letter-complaint in 2005 sent to then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo by a Leni Ubial, a combination of the first names of the complainants.

McArthur, citing in the letter-complaint, attached the commission on Audit in Mindanao to conduct a comprehensive audit in Labangal.

The special audit team was headed by Diphilmar Quidoteno.

Michael Salvador

PDI Mindanao Bureau

PETS

Eleven children pose at a display of toy chicks that look real and are being sold in downtown Cotabato City. The toys are sold for ₱15 each and were imported from China.

Cebu taxi drivers seek ₱15 add-on meter rate

CEBU CITY—THE OPERators in Metro Cebu have asked the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to implement an add-on meter rate of P15 to offset the increasing prices of fuel.

Richard Cabanos, president of the Metro Cebu Taxi Operators Association (MCTOA), on Wednesday filed the petition for a fare adjustment at the LTFRB office in Central Visayas.

He said it was time that the LTFRB adjusted taxi rates because the last increase drivers and operators had was on Sept. 16, 2004 when the flag down rate were up to P30 for the first 300 meters and P2.50 for every succeeding 300 meters, and P2.50 per two minutes waiting time.

At the time, he said the price of unleaded gasoline was pegged at P25.33 per liter but now, it went up to P36.95, or an increase of about 30.33 percent.

He said the LTFRB schedule fair for buses and jeepneys last May 9 due to the rising costs of fuel.

Cabanos, however, said his group decided to ask for an add-on meter rate, instead of an adjustment on the flag down rate, because they did not want to burden the riding public.

"We order not to aggravate the situation, the petitioner suggests a P15 add-on meter rate instead of adjusting the flag down amount, but now it is P115," Cabanos said in his petition.

He, however, clarified that the increase was not for the operators but for the driver's because operators have no plans to increase the rentals for the use of their units.

The group just wanted to ensure that drivers had enough money to bring home to their families, he added.

The MCTOA is composed of 60 operators who own a total of 3,000 taxicabs operating in Metro Cebu.

Douglas Lemoso, LTFRB-Central Visayas transportation development officer, said the LTFRB will set a public hearing next week before it makes a recommendation to the LTFRB central office.

He said that if the petition would be granted, there would be no need to conduct the interviews because the taxi operators only demanded a P15-add-on meter rate. *Rhainier Vispo/Banat, PDI Visayas Bureau*

MILF denies recruiting children for combat duty

COTABATO CITY—THE MORO Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) took exception to a report by the United Nations International Children Organization (UNICEF) that claimed rebel groups in Central Mindanao have been recruiting minors.

The UN-led said the recruitment of minors into the armed conflicts is the worst form of child labor.

"We do not recruit children into our military nor civilians into those in combat. The recruitment of children is not and has never been a policy of the front," Muhaimin Ameera, head of the MILF's external committee secretariat, said.

Eadie Rahayda Nelson-Lee, an official of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in Central Mindanao and project coordinator of a program on children affected by armed conflict, said they stand on "shaming (the) recruitment of youth or children to (armed) conflict."

Campos said because of this, war-zone villages are the most dangerous workplaces for children.

Ameera said what the UN body should do is to look into the root of the conflict, which inevitably drags children to war.

"War is forced on our people," he said. *Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ARMM will never be gun-free, says gov

COTABATO CITY—THE AUTONOMOUS REGION in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which is well-known for being a gun region—ranged by a long-running armed conflict, could never be gun-free, the region's third executive, Gov. Datu Zaldy Ampatuan, said.

"It would be impossible to impose a total gun ban because gun possession among Moro societies has become part of the culture," Ampatuan, a senator of one of the most powerful clans in the ARMM, said.

Lanao Governor Soffie Ogna, which the military estimated at about 30,000, are being blamed for most incidents of violence in the ARMM.

Ampatuan, 38, said that even before a ban, no firearm is home, a firearm has already been removed for him.

Traditionally, a boy or any Muslim weapon was the father's precious possession of old, believed to symbolize authority and respect.

"Today this has been replaced by egos," said 48-year-old police chief Senior Supt. Ahmad Hamadilan.

Hamadilan said the presence of so many enforcement firearms and traces of feud in the region have been the major sources of headaches for authorities.

Despite Ampatuan's statement that it would be hard to control the proliferation of guns in the ARMM, Mamdeka said the police have waged a region-wide drive against unlicensed firearms.

Hamadilan said gun holders would avoid prosecution by having their weapons licensed and learn to become responsible citizens of the community by joining an accredited gun club or organization of gun holders.

"Through this, gun owners are taught about respecting the rights of other people, proper gun handling and firing," he said.

Charlie Inbaac, PDI Mindanao Bureau

URAY-GRAY

Man overall—Abdul Hamim Tamil looks out from his truck cab at the Barter Trade area in Cotabato City while his parents attended to customers nearby. Most of the stalls in this center are owned by and operated by Muslim families.

3 dead, 22 hurt in NLEx mishap

MARILAO, BULACAN—THREE PASSENGERS were killed while 22 others were hurt when a jeepney hit a stalled six-wheeled truck along the northbound lane of the North Luzon Expressway in Barangay Ibayong here on Thursday morning.

Pronounced dead on St. Paul Hospital in this town, where some of the victims were taken, identified the fatalities as Arnold Catacio, 34, a truck helper; and Elizabeth de Leon and Elenita Cudia, who were passengers of the jeepney.

Supt. Pepito Nuada, Marilao police chief, said the jeepney driver tried to overtake another vehicle but he failed to notice that a bus was blocking his way.

Pasada said the driver of the truck is in custody and charge have been filed against him. Eduardo, who was standing near their stalled truck till to talk to the NLEx's shoulder. After hitting Encanto, the jeepney smashed into the truck.

The injured victims were taken to the St. Paul Hospital in Bocaue, St. Michael Hospital in this town, Bluemedics Hospital in Meycauayan town and RGO Hospital in Caloocan City. Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Bureau

ROUNDUP

Docs' wages pushed

MALACAÑANG—The Department of Health is asking Congress for an additional P5.2 billion in its 2006 budget, an equal increase to P6 billion budget, to raise the salaries of government doctors. Secretary Francisco Duque III said raises on Sept. 1. Duque said the additional budget would also allow the agency to honor its commitment to give government doctors bonuses and other incentives. He said the planned increase is competitive with those now of the private sector in stopping the exodus of government doctors.

Jose Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cop killed in gunfight

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A policeman was killed while a suspected member of a kidnap-for-ransom syndicate was suspected soldiers in Barangay Nanca, San Pedro, Laguna on Monday. Calabarzon police director Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa said PO3 Nestor Mahiguin, assigned to the Regional Public Safety Battalion, was killed by Pfc. Rolando Gamalo, a resident of Carmona. Gamalo was wounded by a stray bullet in the body. Verzosa said surveillance operations in Barangay Nanca sought the help of Mahiguin after they witnessed three armed men snatch the local businessman Rogelio Yangco, 61, at around 7:30p.m. Another policeman, SPO2 Miguel Ilarmina, 41, of the Biñan police, was critically shot by two unidentified armed men in Biñan town before dawn Monday.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

'Hot' logs seized

LUCENA CITY—Police and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) personnel in southern Quezon recovered about 170 cubic meters of the hard wood base on three occasions. A report said 100 pieces of abandoned logs with a volume of about 170cu.meters found in Barangay Pandanan on Sunday. Two days earlier, another batch of illegal lumber was found floating in a river near the same village. On Nov. 4, police and DENR employees noted the transport of undocumented lumber in Real, Quezon. Another report said another 100 pieces of illegal logs were discovered in Barangay Liboo. Police arrested the van's driver.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NPA encounter

LEGAZPI CITY—Government troops seized firearms, a laptop and antigovernment materials during an encounter with 20 New People's Army rebels in Barangay Bohol, Guinobatan, Albay, Military reports said there were no casualties from both sides. Col. Erwin Dingal, commanding officer of the 901st IB, said the encounter in Guinobatan lasted 40 minutes and was promptly reported from farmers about the presence of armed rebels in the area.

Jun Rodriguez, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

The Manila Jaycees
58th Induction and Turnover Ceremonies
Westin Philippine Plaza
November 18, 2005

The JCI Philippines-Manila Board of Directors for 2005-2006

Messages

JCI
Junior Chamber International

The Junior Chamber International (JCI) Philippines–Manila is the first and premier leadership development organization in the Philippines and in Asia. Since its humble beginnings on 1947, it has remained committed to the pursuit of public good through pioneering community development programs, while at the same time, through the education of promising young upstarts for excellent leadership opportunities. Its success inspired even more ambitious undertakings, generating more enthusiasm and drawing more members. JCI Manila was formed primarily to fill the need of properly channeling the energies and vitalities of the Filipino youth into an organization that undertakes activities and projects, which would eventually redound to the benefit of the community as a whole. Now on its 58th year, JCI Manila continues to demonstrate its brand of concerned leadership that the organization has always been known for. Under the direction of the 2005-2006 Board of Directors, JCI Manila promises to become a shining testimony of its claim of being the best Jaycee organization, not only in the country, but also in the world, as it has gloriously proven in the past 57 years.

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For more scenic images please visit our website: www.manilajaycees.org or call 525-6792/525-2631

INQUIRER Platinum Code

What is a small inspirational poem and with
matched tongue-twisting word at short end?

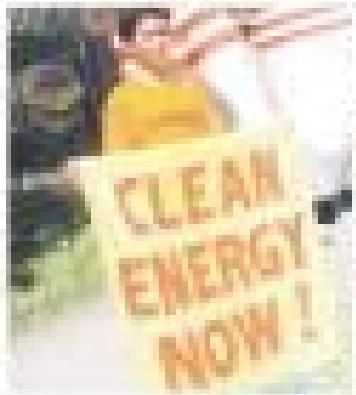
Cheaper Quezon power pushed

LUCENA CITY – A QUEZON OFFICIAL has proposed that the new coal-fired powered plants operating in Pagbilao and Mauban towns supply the electric requirements of the province at a much cheaper price.

Under the proposed "Quezon Environment Smart Status Ordinance" of Board Member Reynaldo Ishiguro, the Mirant Pagbilao Corp. and the Quezon Power Ltd. will be obliged to directly sell their power supply to Quezon-based electric utility firms and public service cooperatives at a discounted price.

Ishiro, chair of the special committee on power, said Republic Act No. 9136 mandates the Department of Energy to devise ways and means of giving direct benefits to the local government hosting power generation or power-supply facilities.

He said Republic Act No. 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 has declared that it is the policy of the state to ensure affordable electricity and that power generation companies are under obligation to continuously provide benefits to the host areas.



ELECTRICITY: Some of a particular many expensive than [illegible] power and more, according to members of Greenpeace in a protest rally in Manila recently

Ishiro said the province could also benefit from the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol, which allows developed countries to invest in projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries as an alternative to more costly emissions reductions in their own countries.

Under the CDM, developed countries can earn credits for each ton of carbon dioxide equivalent that is reduced, which can be sold and traded and used by industrialized countries to meet a part of their emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol.

Ishiro said the province could benefit from the CDM if it sells 700 MW to the National Power Corp., buying 30 MW at private capacity.

"The QPL plant in Mauban town produces a total of 500 MW. It's under obligation to sell 400 MW to the Manila Electric Co.

"The IPPs shall allow the provinces to the direct sale of their excess power supply by giving preferential treatment to the host provinces," Ishiro said, adding that, in turn, electric utilities and cooperatives should apply the discounted rates to their consumers.

Currently Quezon Electric Cooperatives I and II distributes electricity to a total of 31 municipalities, while Meralco provides power supplies to six towns and Lucena City.

Ishiro said his ordinance is the response of the provincial government to find ways to provide Quezon residents with lower electric rates by hosting the new power plants. – Phyllis Mallari Lit., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Finger-pointing begins in Subic rape case

[illegible] hosting Jail Director Gilberto and he refused," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said he told Gilberto: "Hold them until we inquest once done."

But the prosecutor failed to do so.

Gonzalez said he then called up Olongapo City Prosecutor Procedencio Adiaoan but he said all the other prosecutors were in court and unable to proceed to the Subic jail, where the accused American were set to have after participating in counterterrorism exercises in the Philippines.

He said he left instructions for Adiaoan to immediately proceed to the SBMA to conduct the inquest—the determination of probable cause immediately after the termination of exercise.

Things happened fast

Unfortunately, Gonzalez said the US Marines were no longer at the SBMA when the prosecutor finally arrived as they were not able to wait for him.

Asked why the Filipino officials yielded custody, Gonzalez said the US military attaché invoked Article 6 of the VFA, which states that the United States should have immediate custody of the person sought to be tried.

Gonzalez said the previous week US custody was mandatory en route to the Olongapo hearing, but Miriam Defensor-Santiago expressed dismay that DFA officials were "slow in acting" and appeared not to have sufficient knowledge of the VFA provisions. Philippine jurisdiction over the Marines.

"It was too timid. I get the impression that the DFA was napping, gingerly, it was acting as if it was stepping on eggshells," Santiago told reporters in a text message.

Santiago said the DFA only had to enforce the letter of the VFA.

"I'm very sad that we take this attitude. It makes us sound like we were still a semi-colony of the US," she said.

"We're afraid to stand up for our rights. Pag sa akin wala nang takot (But we might send these Caspian cases and this encourages them to be bolder) or to be more forthcoming about the provisions of a million times," said Santiago, who co-chairs the joint committee on Foreign Affairs and National Defense.

Santiago said she was informed by Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Antonio Arcilla that the custody issue was brought up by the United States for custody as required in the VFA.

Arcilla said there appeared to be no problem as the US military was reminded them of their existing oversight.

'National security matter'

At the outset, Arcilla said he would not answer the questions of the senators and congressmen unless they held an executive or closed-door session.

"Why? The people are entitled to know. Is this a matter of national security?" she said, questioning the dignity of a Filipino," Defensor said.

DFA invokes EO 464

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile asked Arcilla: "Are you answering about this issue? Is this a matter of power and war? Has it upset the request of the US?"

Arcilla said he was just following foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo's instructions.

She handed out the recent Supreme Court decision on Executive Order No. 464, Ms Arroyo's order prohibiting officials from testifying at congressional hearings without her authority, saying the senators were confronted on this issue.

"Oh, come on. I've handled several cases involving the 17 years. What is national security in a rape case?" Enrile said.

Arcilla said the DFA had an agreement with the US Embassy not to disclose these documents.

Sen. Jamby Madrigal questioned Arcilla said the case could be considered misunderstanding, and that the country could save on custody because it involved rape which is a heinous crime offense.

Enrile asked Arcilla if the Philippines accepted that position on remote military courts to get custody of the Marines.

Inquest had ended and Enrile demanded: "Yes or no?"

Formal notification

It was then that Arcilla admitted the DFA had until a "formal notification" to the US Embassy. Enrile asked her to submit the notification in the committee.

Where Rep. Ramonito Bulilan Jr. gave asked Arcilla when he filed the notification. Arcilla said: "Yesterday (Wednesday) afternoon, after consultation with the DOJ."

Bulilan took as too long," the lawmaker said.

Rep. Erico Basilio asked what the government could do if the United States skipped the Marines case to Okinawa.

Gonzalez said the Philippines could not do anything, except to invoke the extradition treaty if the Marines also ended.

DFA intellectual fantasies

Santiago recalled her ire on VFA Commissioner Ernesto Garcia to Teodoro Pendez for his previous statement that nothing in the VFA required Philippine custody of the Marines.

She said the provisions on witness identity issues and on having a place of detention in the country acceptable to the Americans implied that the Philippines could take physical custody of the personnel.

"You have to be familiar with the rules of international law. We cannot just express our own intellect and fantasies in a hearing like this," Santiago said.

Child in Jail's suffering from—the kindest thing I can say—downsized conditions," Santiago said.

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GMA wary of FVR, JDV, says document

[illegible] ghost document executed by Jones."

"What will they think of me?" Bunye said in a letter statement issued before he left with Mr. to receive gifts for South Pacific Economic Cooperation conference.

'Celebrated' leadership

In the portion "Political alignments—Supporting Trends," the document said: "(There) has been no mass exodus so far within the ranks of pro-administration congressmen as shown by the voting in Congress' last presidency."

Reason it was the committee "FVR, JDV (Joseph) is to cut short PGMA term—JDV leadership is the House must be cultivated for presidency," the document said.

Listed in the scenarios as supposed possible replacements for Jr. Estrada were Pichay, House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, Senator Ramon Revilla Jr. and Senator Juan Ponce Enrile (JPE).

The challenge to De Venecia's leadership in the House built up slowly during the month as congressmen discussed the precipitation that would help prioritized House officials and consolidate chains of their respective posts.

Upon the resumption of Congress in session on Nov. 7, Pichay said some lawmakers' nocturnal reforms in the House. He made no bones about challenging De Venecia for the speakership again if certain changes weren't made soon enough.

"The signing of non-allies back in Pampanga and a Congress congressional is a play which, if wrapped, will dissipate the leadership of the opposition," Tanad said.

FVR 'source'

While De Venecia was dealing with the challenge to his leadership, Ramos was building up his position that he was planning a coup against the Arroyo administration.

A supposed US Embassy document that reported that Ramos planned to run as many as Arroyo, six months before the "Hello Garci" scandal caused doubts over the legitimacy of the Arroyo presidency.

A note at the end of the document, "check on FVR sources," was among the apparent comments included for the source's political survival.

Among the source's unveiling of her role interviews with regard to Ramos and De Venecia could possess the worst that has helped isolate [illegible] presidency until now," Tanad said.

Ramos has denied any Ramos and De Venecia as having helped turn the tide for Ms Arroyo in July when they vowed by her despite spat calls from such influential coalition as former President Corazon Aquino and Senate President Franklin Drilon.

But the two men, proponents of a shift to a parliamentary federal form of government, had also called for immediate Charter change to help Ms Arroyo to ride her term short.

Noises on other contenders

From the notes on the document that Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez described on Wednesday as a "secret paper," Ms Arroyo received many of another ally, Vice President Noli de Castro.

The paper said he was just following foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo's instructions.

Church, business division

The document said the Church and the business sector were divided on whether to call for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

The supposedly elected the following note:

"Good people guided and strengthened ... of PGMA groups [and] continuously derailing the Church's initiatives ... [and]

"PGMA to continue to exercise LEGISLIN."

The paper said that while a faction of the Makati Business Club and the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines had called for Ms Arroyo's resignation, «five influential business groups had taken a «stance» more.

Ms Arroyo's supposed enemies were "business moderates could [not] support her 2006." The idea of a principled stance was downplayed, with a note stating that this support was "profit-motivated."

Real power value?

Despite Ms Arroyo's pronouncements of an economic "abundance leader" had "not set fires [of] up."

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Doy: 'The man who gave way,' says his widow Celia

It is a portrait of a man's quest for the highest office in the land, inspired by a father who was Japan's surrogate president in the Philippines during World War II. Jejomar Binay could have been his "Tito" birthday.

Anticipated in the current political environment, the Laurel memoir is a study in self-abnegation and betrayal, of unanswered prayers and of opportunities missed.

It celebrated stage actress, painter and actress, Celia says her husband had entered his intrigue into the project.

"But still some are reluctant," he told her. "Let's wait and see." She acknowledged. "So," she had presented. "You will get well ... and we will write it together."

With a faint smile, she recalls, he moved his head from side to side, a gesture of doubt or finality. "You will write it?"

Laurel died on Jan. 27, 2006, of cancer.

Main preoccupation

Soon after, Celia has tried down to work. The president's the rather table book published in May—227 glossy pages filled with photographs chronicling the life of one of the major Philippine leaders during the dark days of the martial law regime.

"My main preoccupation now is to remind people of my husband," says Celia in an interview in the study of the Diliman Boulevard home her husband built for his own.

He is being forgotten

"My late wife was devoted to the country," says the 77-year-old widow.

"It's a pity his efforts are being forgotten. Many people now do not know Doy Laurel. He's the one that goes now," she says, seated at a table filled with his late birthday cards. "Greetings, congratulations, some addressed to cards, are scattered about in the room.

Laurel's political journey started when he launched the UNIDO (United Liberal Democratic Party) in 1988. He had risen up a pre from core brought against a policeman by a poor woman whose husband had been gunned with bullets and dumped in a trash can.

It was then the widely publicized trial that made him a national icon.

Since then, he became obsessed with defending negligent litigants who could not afford the help of a lawyer.

He was until just spared his to. He had a brilliant law practice after resigning on the minister's and later a doctorate at Yale—until he decided he would be a "defender of the defenseless." Saying he wanted to bring his crusade to Congress, he successfully ran for the Senate in 1987.

The technician-it started him in 1972 found him locked out of the Senate as well—by others who had thought they would give the President the benefit of the doubt. He kept in the sidelines until 1978, when he politically influential chairman group from Marcos.

Laurel became one of Marcos' prominent foes, organizing the Separate and Independent political parties into a solid front—the United Democratic Opposition, or Unido.

He [illegible]—Elva alone—never like used to build Unido, sensing that sooner or later, Marcos would subject himself to an election.

The snap election

It was a [illegible] move.

In November 1985, Marcos, weary of massive protests sparked by the assassination of opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino II as he disembarked from a wall-to-wall free voter rallies, called for a snap presidential election.

At Cabinet Aquino vacillated, Unido elected to proclaim Laurel its candidate against Marcos. Aquino subsequently declared her candidacy.

Unido was forced to field a single presidential candidate against Marcos, Laurel, after lengthy discussions with Aquino, decided to stand down. He agreed to be the vice presidential candidate of the widow of his slain husband friend.

Aquino ran under Unido, which had helped organize the massive crowds that joined the funeral of the assassinated opposition leader. The "yellow brigades" and the eastern wood in Makati either to have the foundation of the Marcos regime.

Like father

Stepping aside for Aquino was a supreme sacrifice for Laurel. He thought about his father from release he drew inspiration. He recalled that 32 years earlier, Jose P. Laurel had given way to Ramon Magsaysay who went on to become President.

"I believe that personal and group interest must yield to national interest," he says in his diary.

In March 1986, on month of to the installation of Aquino as President in the wake of the Edsa I uprising and Marcos' escape to Hawaii as aides herded at the Palace gates, the young government was plunged into turbulence.

The first months of Aquino's presidency saw challenges to the [illegible] of the authoritarian regime.

"I felt it was ironic that after struggling for abolishing a dictatorship, we should again resort to dictatorial power by abrogating the constitution and governing by decree," Laurel wrote in his diary.

The betrayal

At a special Cabinet committee meeting, it was decided that the Senate—the Marcos rubber-stamp parliament—would be retained. Laurel began to realize that he was being used by the government to [illegible] the Senate.

"I felt a sense of betrayal. I was used to [illegible] and then [illegible]," he says in his diary.

Laurel was unaware of it at the time.

In accordance with the directive of the constitutional commission, Laurel accepted the formal resignation of the office of the Prime Minister from Cesar Virata on March 25, 1986.

Less than four hours later Aquino read an executive proclamation [illegible] the 1973 Constitution, the Batasan and all national and local positions, including Laurel's [illegible] prime minister.

Utmost restraint

"I would not believe what I heard. Cory had, unfortunately decided to set up a revolutionary government," he says.

"I was constitutionally Vice President of the Republic. Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister at the time. After decision meeting no less than the abolition of the Batasan and a few should have been also asked such as.

"Yes, I was now astounded. I was astounded. I was astounded. I was

'Johnny Midnight' shot in Las Piñas City office

By Jocelyn R. Uy

A RADIO BROADCASTER was attacked by a lone gunman in his Las Piñas City office yesterday morning, the latest in a series of murders or physical attacks in the country.

John Ivenn Rodgers Joseph, known to the early 2000s as Johnny Midnight, had just arrived in his office at around 10:10 a.m. at the UCPB Towers building along the Alabang-Zapote Road corner Golden Street when Rambo Base barged in and fired his .45-caliber revolver at Joseph's driver, city police chief Supt. Josephus Anguluan told the business.

Base then leaned on Joseph. The 61-year-old broadcaster, who is also lawyer, is known to have shot in the left leg. "The driver, Alexander Madrideo, was also [wounded] and only sustained a wound in his right hand," said Anguluan.

Thinking that he had killed the broadcaster, Base immediately left and boarded a bus bound for Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

The local police and its Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), however, was able to intercept the bus.

JOSEPH

"Had it not been for Madrideo, who immediately alerted the traffic violence unit the crime scene, the suspect could have escaped," Anguluan said.

Madrideo, a retired cop, immediately reported the incident to a traffic enforcer detailed at the intersection of Alabang-Zapote Road and Golden Street.

"The traffic enforcer then alerted the police through the radio," he said.

Joseph was rushed to the Perpetual Help Medical Center, and later transferred to the Asian Hospital and Medical Center in Muntinlupa City where he was reported in stable condition.

Base told police that a personal grudge had pushed him to shoot the broadcaster. He added that he had asked Joseph to "beef" him, but something "sacred" happened to him instead. The suspect told police that Joseph professed voodoo rites on him, Anguluan said.

Joseph gained popularity some 20 years ago for his promotion of gays and lesbians and as host he called "Coming" on an overnight radio program, earning him the tag "Johnny Midnight." He had claimed that drinking "boiling semen" was good for one's health.

The broadcaster fell victim to a daily radio drive.

No journalist has been killed in the country this year. 13 were killed in 2009. The Committee to Protect Journalists had said the country was the world's most dangerous place for journalists. —With a report from AP

POLICEMEN from the Southern Police District man a newly set up checkpoint to look out for car thieves and car hijackers, and have invoked commercials for its campaign.

Car thieves are now more technology savvy

By Edson Tandoc Jr. and Rovi Quinsaat

BYPASSING BEEPING ALARM SYSTEMS OR patronizing pay parking lots may no longer do the trick, and could only give car owners a false sense of security according to anti-car theft operatives.

The reason: car thieves are now updated with the latest technologies and can easily switch off alarms or dismantle security gadgets, SPO1 Edilberto Sanchez of the Southern Police District Carnapping Unit said.

In his two years with the unit, Sanchez has handled cases where car thieves managed to drive away in cars kept in pay parking lots without showing parking tickets.

"They would tell parking attendants they lost their parking tickets and would just agree to pay fines," Sanchez said.

He said the best defense is still never to leave cars unattended, if possible. The common policy of car parking establishments demand the original documents of the vehicles from the clients in the case of lost tickets.

Owners should also choose pay parking services with efficient ticketing systems and guard visibility. Police said owners should also avoid parking their cars outside their houses or on side streets. "Most of the cases I have handled were cars stolen while parked," Sanchez said.

Beware of poseurs

He said car dealers should also be careful with car thieves posing as buyers, and they should not allow a prospective buyer to test drive the vehicles alone.

SPO1 Ernesto Torres also warned that thieves also had their eyes on motorcycles, which are easier to take away. "There are groups who just lend their target motorcycles unless a test," he said.

The procedure saves thieves the bother of having to restart the engine or dismantle the locks but could possibly attract attention.

He also advised tenants to be cautious in hiring drivers. In some of the cases he handled, the drivers turned out to be in cahoots with car thieves, he added.

In Makati City meanwhile, Richard Hizon, 36, has his blue Mitsubishi Fuzeo (XEE 273) parked in front of his house in Barangay Poblacion, just a few blocks away from the Makati Police District headquarters.

Just the other day, five armed men forcibly took a newly bought Toyota RAV4 from Hizon's tenants Fidelio Ricardo Jr. who was also robbed of cash and other valuables.

"We already have in place residents and information drive to our barangays and villages teaching residents how to protect their cars, especially those who do not have garages," said SPO3 acting chief Supt. Elmo Triste.

Night patrol

Apart from mobile patrols, the city's police force also been getting help from its re-mobilized, including barangay tanodmen who conduct regular night patrols, particularly in residential areas. Triste said the MPD would also suggest to residents of its villages and barangays to put restriction beams at late night hours until dawn to act as gazebos or other service during the late night hours until dawn, blocking off vehicle access and controlling the neighborhood design, he said.

In a related development, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is looking into the possible involvement of a Chinese-Filipino businessman in a notorious Pasay City-based car theft syndicate. NBI National Capital Region (NCR) Officer executive officer Reynaldo Esmeralda said they had recovered a stolen Honda CRV in front of suspect Mark Co Chaleng's house inside the Fil-Estate Building, Annapolis St., San Juan.

"We still definitely file on theft charges against Co Bajong because the stolen vehicle was found in his possession," Esmeralda told reporters. He added that they are checking the suspect's connection with the syndicate recently implicated in various car theft and carjacking incidents in the metropolis. —With a report from Cleo Ong

SUBTRES 1 8 6
SIX DIGIT 2 9 2 7 1 5
EZ2 18 1
SUPERLOTTO 6/49 3 25 37 16 37 46
P17,680,325.40
METRO
Lira Ester G. Dizon

3 die in jeepney, truck smashup at NLEx

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THREE PERSONS WERE KILLED and several others were wounded in an early morning rollercoaster accident at the North Luzon Expressway yesterday.

Traffic Control Supervisor Deng Segismo identified one of the casualties as Arnold Estropia, driver of a cargo wood truck that was parked in the third lane of the highway along Km. 30 (Sapang Palay, Bulacan).

Segismo said the truck driver and Glenda Pedia, 37, who was on board a passenger jeepney that smashed into the stalled truck, were killed instantly.

Another passenger, Elizabeth de Leon, 30, was declared dead on arrival at the St. Paul's Hospital in Bocaue, Bulacan. An unidentified female passenger, who was in critical condition, was brought to the St. Luke's hospital in Quezon City.

Among the reported 21 passengers, only 11 who were brought to other hospitals for treatment were tracked down by investigators.

"We are still tracing the whereabouts of the other victims because some have somehow brought them to other hospitals," Segismo said.

The accident was reported by a motorist at exactly 7:00 a.m., according to the traffic control supervisor.

One CCTV had mentioned the truck in the middle of the road, but everything happened so fast," he explained.

The driver apparently had to change lane in the middle of the highway because it was difficult to move the vehicle in the shoulder lane, Segismo said.

Initial investigation revealed that the passenger jeepney coming from Meycauayan and bound for Malolos suddenly careened to the right and did not immediately notice the stalled truck. "It was too late for the jeepney driver to move back to his lane after he overtook a bus using the right lane," Segismo added.

14 nabbed with explosives cache in Navotas

By Margaux C. Ortiz, Nancy C. Carvajal

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI) yesterday arrested 14 suspected members of a syndicate allegedly involved in the manufacture of illegal explosives in a Navotas shanty area.

NBI Anti Organized Crime Division (AOCD) chief Oscar Embiado said his men also seized at least 30 kilos of suspected ammonium nitrate, a major ingredient in bomb-making normally used as a cold inert out and manga Dewey Indanes. The NBI also confiscated other raw materials including potassium nitrate, sulfur and blasting caps.

The suspects were identified as Rogelio Gutierez, Christopher Almeda, Allan Gabi, Rolando Abad, Alfredo Chavlero, Teodulo Lipmer, Michael Serrano, Marlon Serrano, Fernando Amaranda, Ronald Warren, Ariel Lebanon, Randy Montes, Anthony Olaya and Pantaleo Serrano, Pablo Olaya, the owners of the house in Bgua where the raid was conducted, managed to escape.

Embiado said they received reports about a group openly selling explosives in Bahay mun based in Bayabapao, Cavite and Bataan.

According to barangay Bgua Chairwoman Lineng, the suspects are not natives of Navotas but Bulacanos who had been living along the town's shoreline for some time now. He added it was common knowledge in the area that the suspects were into illegal fishing, and that they had been previously charged with possession of explosive materials.

Manila, Makati ready for SEAG

By Tjeru V. Quintuvalle and Tina D. Santos

A DAY THAT STARTED LIKE ANY other was suddenly marred by bloodshed on a usually quiet street in Makati City when seven pistons rocked a three-star hotel, injuring three men.

Makati City police quickly cordoned off the crime scene and closed to traffic streets surrounding the blast area, while the hotel evacuated its guests to safety.

It was the first few minutes of an explosion simulation exercise that Makati City's protective services staged yesterday, as a test of security preparedness for the Southeast Asian Games (SEAG).

Meanwhile, Muslim communities in Manila will be augmenting the efforts of city policemen in the task of providing safety and security to participants of the coming event.

In a meeting with the officials of the Office on Muslim Affairs (OMA) and tribal leaders the other day, Manila Police District Director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulseng agreed with the proposal of the groups to maximize the part of the Muslim communities in promoting peace and unity during the sports event which will begin on Nov. 27.

METROBRIEFS

Not a park tenant

THE HOUSE of the Avicennia Forest Park caretaker was considered as illegal structure inside the property, according to Division of City Schools superintendent Ms. Luisa Guinoo as she explained the demolition of Jesly's

house over the weekend. Guinoo's property city City Hall workers on Wednesday. "Construction of the teachers' building is going on, so the property has to be cleared of other structures. It's as simple as that," Guinoo told Inquirer. The culture official added that the city school board does not allow anybody to stay or live inside the 2.1-hectare property. Possession had been given by Mirimar Foundation, the park's caretaker, to take care of the property and keep the place clean for the last few years. Possession said the demolition team had torn down her house without showing her any eviction notice or court order. Tina D. Santos

Book Week activities

TO MARK the 71st anniversary of National Book Week, the Philippine Librarians Association Inc., in cooperation with the National Library, has organized week-long activities from Nov. 19-26 with the theme, "Kultura ng Pagbabasa's Pilipinohanin: Aklat at Maklas Ning Pagsasanay." NBW is to kick-off on Saturday. Various activities scheduled by the NBW committee once a month around Rizal Park, and essay writing and story-telling contests. For participants, call Soriano at 840-4809 loc. 1 or Lolita C. Alonzo at 834-3076, 831-1536 or Rona Nuada at 525-0958.

G. Goose zaps Hapee-PCU for third win

By Marc Anthony Reyes

RJ QUIMAHAN LITERALLY THREW HIS weight around, scoring 26 points including back-to-back clutch baskets as Granny Goose WestSide Manual Hapee-PCU, 65-53, for its third straight victory in the 2004 PBL Unwrap Cup yesterday at the JCSGO Gymnasium in Cebu.

The burly 6-foot-5 Quimahan reached out for an 8-0 scoring run for the frontrunners, who moved up to solo second at 3-1 while sending the Tourists down to their third loss in four outings.

Quimahan, dubbed as the "Baby Shaq" of Cebu for his sumo resemblance of his style of play with NBA superstar Shaquille O'Neal, also finished with 13 rebounds, two blocks and one steal in 26 minutes of play.

Manuela Stoneridge, with 11 forgets having key baskets in the late quarter, dominated his four-point performance, 7-9-14, in the second game.

Hapee hit a three-pointer at the start of the fourth quarter and added four more in the final three minutes to finish with 16 points and lift the Jewelers to their second win in four games.

The heavens fell to their fourth straight defeat.

Now handled by coach Joe Tipa, the Tourists-runners controlled the game in the second quarter to even take a 44-37 battle three minutes into the third quarter.

But the Northerners managed to close back through Jesse Castro, whose six straight points allowed Hapee to move within 53-51.

Quimahan stepped on the rally with a short jumper off Jesse Sol, to that touched off a 10-4 whiplap by the fourth quarter.

Castro finished with 19 points for Hapee, which drew 3026 help from 2004 NCAA MVP and broker of the Year Cebu Eighter.

STANDINGS	W	L
Magnolia	3	0
Granny G	3	1
Harbour Q	2	1
Star or Shine	1	1
Blackhills	2	2
Toyota Otis	1	2
Hapee-PCU	1	3
Tai Pandora	0	4

SUMMARY	SCORE
(FG) game	
T.Jr.N.—Hapee-PCU vs Granny Goose	
(G) vs (—) Harbour Centre vs Magnolia	

G—Castro 19, Lorenzo 8, Santos 8, Abad 6, Espiritu 6, Lucero 6, Gerona 5, Cortez 5, Cardenio 2, Sosa 0.

HAPEE-PCU (G)—Griffin 18, Abad 11, Cayetano 8, Mejia 6, Gerona 4, Mina 3, Ramirez 3, Nuico 1, Jose 1, Bunch 0, Imperial 0, Lucero 0, Lucero (coach).

Quarters: 17-13, 40-37, 53-51, 65-53

Second Game

SPRINGFIELD (G)—Vergara 18, Lorbes 14, Gonzalez 12, Serrano 5, Dela Cuesta 5, Chan 4, Esquivel 4, Espiritu 3, Dalisay 2, Ulanday 2, Rivera 2.

SAN SEBASTIAN (G)—Bonus 15, Ramirez 10, Rubio 10, Yee 9, Sierra 8, Estrada 8, Esteban 6, Lucero 2, Mabanta 2, Cayetano 1, Augusto 0, Ong 0, Leonard.

Quarters: 20-15, 35-30, 51-47, 70-67

EDC's Eastern Insurance's Jay-ar Quinsaba (left) harasses and fouls Mountain's Bic Boks Cuesta in their game yesterday. Rudolf Dela Cruz

Peña unhurt in crash

MACAU—JAIME PEÑA FIGURED in a multiple-car collision shortly after the annual start of the premier race on Thursday but this failed to dampen his competitive spirit going into the qualifying run for the Macau Grand Prix here.

All competing drivers were required to complete a two-lap hot run on the 6.4-kilometer Guia Circuit before they were officially timed. The actual 31-lap race is on Sunday.

"I had no space to pass," said Peña, whose team here is funded by Tiger Airways, ICTSI, Inc., PLDT MyBiz, PLDT MyDSL, Ad Alert Mobile, Hanjin Shipping and tigerairways.com. "Things like this happen and there was simply no way for me to stop."

Court orders POC to . . .

From page A1

hall International's refusal to acknowledge the POC action and instead banned the country from, among others, organizing basketball tournaments like the SEAG together.

As a result, POC president and Philsec head Jose "Peping" Cojuangco announced during a SEAG Federation Council meeting last week that basketball would be scrapped from the SEAP as no longer a SEAC member and its officials cannot supervise and conduct the sport as required by tournament rules.

Judge Barrios told the POC, in a three-page decision, "to restore, reinstate and recognize the BAP ... as a regular member of the POC with the same rights, privileges and status as was enjoyed by or accorded to said entity prior to the suspension and or expulsion."

Appeal to POC

A press statement from the BAP said that it is "on with basketball in the SEA Games."

The POC, though, still has the ball in its hands and can predict pending the court proceedings if it chooses to.

"The BAP is currently extending its hands of peace and unity to basketball," said BAP president Jany Lim in a press statement. "I appeal to the POC to immediately comply with the court's order."

"If the POC complies with the court order and informs Phisec about it, Phisec suspension of the Philippines is automatically lifted," he added.

There was no reaction from Cojuangco, through his spokesman Joey Romasanta, which was requested by the Inquirer through a phone call yesterday.

The BAP has continued with the training and preparation of its team in Cebu under coach Jimmy Gomez.

Until the Filoy suspension, the Philippines is expected to win the basketball SEAG gold for the 16th straight time.

RB Barako, Phone Pals clash; SLR battles SMB

SEE FULL BARAKO AND TALK

Menk, Taulava headline crack South All-Stars

THE FILAM UNDERDOG ONE

Miñoza fires 70; Que way off

RANCHO—STANDEE MIÑOZA SHUTDOWN '93 the Asian Tour in style Thursday, but defending champion Angelo Que fired the opener of an early exit in the $200,000 Mercedes Masters 2004 Omnium presented by Thai Airways here.

Miñoza, the top Filipino shotmaker, fired a 2-under par 70 on the Old Ash Hill Golf and Country Club to end up four strokes behind first-round leader Danny Chia of Malaysia, who opened up with a dazzling 66.

Que, who scored a breakthrough win here last year, struggled with a 76 that barely qualified him for the second round along with 72 others.

He had nines of 37-39 on a course inferior to completed Thai star Thongchai Jaidee and former US Open champion Corey Pavin over the top spot in the inaugural edition of the event.

Gerald Tendero recorded par 72 for Cedric Lo's 73 and Carlo Villarosa also started poorly with rounds of 75 and 74, respectively.

Miñoza, who finished in the top 10 in the Bangkok Airways Open last month, finished three of his first four holes for a 3G-coming par.

With earnings of $67,368 in 10 events, Miñoza is using the event as warmup for the final leg of the Japan Tour qualifying set late this month.

The magic of teamwork... Breaking barriers...

Boys' Basketball Grade School · Boys' Basketball High School · Girls' Basketball High School · Girls' Volleyball Grade School · Girls' Volleyball High School · Boys' Volleyball High School

Assumption College of Makati · Benedictine International School · Canossa School Santa Rosa Cebu · Cardeo Don Bosco School · Colegio San Agustin · Dimasi Preparatory School · Dominican College · Ecole Ayurvedic College · Don Bosco Technical College Mandaluyong · Don Bosco Technical Institute Makati · Escuela Santa Paraschal School · Hope Christian High School · Immaculate Conception Academy Greenhills · Jose Abad Santos Memorial School · Jubilee Christian School · La Immaculada Concepcion School · La Salle Lipa · Lourdes School Mandaluyong · Lourdes School Quezon City · Notre Dame of Greater Manila · OB Montessori Greenhills · OB Montessori Las Pinas · Our Lady of Grace Montessori ·

Austere SEAG rites in Bacolod tomorrow

By Cedrill Tupaz
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—AUSTERE BUT RESPECTFUL

The two-hour ceremony will usher in the city's hosting of the Southeast Asian Games on Saturday at the Panaad Park and Stadium here.

Working on a P1 million budget, producers of the program yesterday said they have still got "extraordinary things" and instead maintain the use of indigenous materials and showcase Negros Occidental's culture and heritage.

Identities for the opening show

Meanwhile, the show's creative director, Tanya Lopez, said the stage at the Panaad Park has been reinforced with concrete, while the SEAG theme song "We Are One" has been re-arranged to accommodate austere atmosphere.

But Joe Blanchard Organizing Committee executive expressed concern over the weather condition on Saturday after the Negros Occidental Provincial Disaster Management Team announced that there is a great possibility that the event will be hit by the typhoon Reming.

Rey Alvarez Fajardo said they have been offering eggs and newscast at the Gatchalian Mountains—a timid and jailed Avenida here....hoping that bad weather in the SEAG venues, including in Laguna, Subic and Cebu, will not ruin the Games.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco will be present for the opening.

Among the highlights of the show are performances by the multi-awarded Manaluhan dancers and the all Carlota Dreamdancers as well as an aerial ribbon from the Don Salvador Benedicto area community.

"We're focusing on the environment," Lopez said, stressing that the "small" budget will not deter them from presenting a production that "has had a very in-depth approach to Mundo and Cebu."

ALLEY Fernandez, a runner and swimmer, carries the SEAG torch for Bacolod yesterday.

Riza, Czarina Mae reach ITF q'finals

By Mars Anthony Reyes

RIZA OCAMPO LIGAMBEBE showed she's the hottest of three Philippines players in the national team by handling our former Hanoi SEA Games teammate Czarina Mae Arong, 6-7, 6-3, 7-5, yesterday to reach the quarterfinals of the Bolcan ITF Philippines Women's Circuit 2 at the Ninoy Aquino Memorial Tennis Center.

Zalamedda, 19, kept her hopes despite losing the first set and rallied to win 6-2 in the third to subdue the Russian and assure a showdown with Taiwanese Hsiang Chuan at 10:30 a.m. today.

Czarina Mae Arong, the Filipino No. 1, captured a shaky second set to also advance with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Ellyn Dimaranan of Bicol.

She will take on fourth-seeded Japanese Chiemi Iwanska, who bested Rizalyn Filipinas, 7-5, 6-0.

Iwanska, who placed second in last week's first leg, climbed from 2-5 in the second set behind a solid backhand game and claimed from the second to put Zalamedda in the next round.

Zalamedda, a ranked had been 892 A who didn't see action for the past three weeks since arriving here, and decided on the country's main entrance in the coming Southeast Asian Games which begins Dec. 27.

"Nag-pahinga muna ako para maging fresh ako sa laro," said Zalamedda, who ranked 892, 2-0, in the third set following Fuse removed her backpack.

Fresh from Hanoi, Czarina Mae Arong has shown her mettle in the opening match against Ho. Ah-Chiemi Lee Ann, 6-0, 6-0, shows easy follow-through Sze Sioux Mi.

Before Natasha Khan bowed out second seed Thai Nilkamon Chaipitong, 7-6 (2), 6-7 (1), 6-3. She will next take on fifth seed Chi-hsien Hsiang, both of Thailand, who defeated Australian qualifier Sallamon Gaten, 6-3, 6-4.

Bautista bout: No profit, but history

By Barak Dreistad

TAGBILARAN, BOHOL—OFICIALMARE TEDOYE telling Rey "Boom-Boom" Bautista he would be fighting his toughest fight.

Pitching really were here. The youthful fighter had been given this false warning several times in the past.

Indeed, his last "toughest fight" turned out to be overcoming Philippine pride when he slugged or bonded, issued to found by by the owner of Elvis Martelo in the Staples Center in California last September to reach off a Juhr-5 battle to the bell by Filipino fighter in Los Angeles, a victory parade forward to the round by HBO.

As he had done before, the now-famous son of a fisherman and a part-market vendor from Cebu City, over 40 kilometers of narrow road-road transition, but again believed the old warning.

Bautista, the youngest professionals of the main fighters, "Bahala na si Tagbilaran" "never little pe-anano di ko kaya, scientific duel.

But the result could be consumption in this.

Position, 15 reigning World Boxing Organization Asia-Pacific bantamweight champion, [illegible] of Inovate against African Ghana Amenyo-Ayeno was right when they choke the middle of a punched. Inspector football fans that still pretty assume the glitter and glam of Las Vegas overnight.

He learned "Bautista" the ring can, with the slowly-handy and clever of a hungry Indian woman, has a dynamite record of 27 wins, 22 on knockout.

Bautista has an undefeated 17-0 on road, 13 by knockout.

"We don't see growth or improving," explained Tagbilaran City Mayor Dan Thor Lim when one look at the end the grand boxing presentation could steal glitter of the Las Vegas.

Fireworks and live upbeat Entertainment provides will feature the world-renowned Lolos Children's Choir, Bohol Island's Skaw-ter-Millers Band, and former Prime Bobby Soul.

Online Bautista, Mayor Lim, with the kind fans and guests of a home Clean applaud, did not leave to be told he's mounting the greatest production of his career to once and for all by competitive.

"This is a match for history, to prove I remained about career," Lim told the Inquirer in his unprecedented fight to escape neo-Bautista competitive.

Bautista's pre-fight training camp is also under way at the Elvis Martelo Training Center in Cebu City, where he is being trained by Filipino trainer Edito Villamor.

Gil Mallorca and the provincial government are hosting the bash of the fight, with league dominion coming in from the congressmen of his province.

Mr. Bautista are being told, rumored, open below, still be asked to give contributions to exchange for investment dollars in exactly who will be honored as a person in the fight.

The card, which also features the challenge of Israel to Cesar Amenyo to Indon Pablo Ellard for the WBO Asian junior lightweight title, will be shown over ESPN 9 starting at 7 a.m. Sunday.

Lim said he is open to receive only vouchers for down gate and full cash to bettors, the gate to swap Bolcanic offer President Joko Pesona, to whose honor the fight site has been named.

Alumno ends gold drought

Turn page 36

chartwise body movements and postures.

"It's the artistic side of the sport and people think it's easy," said the 5-foot-8 shooter. "It looks easy but you have to focus. Synchronicity is important. You have to perfect the basics."

More importantly, it was Alipayo's first time to compete in the World Championships. The Baguio-based athlete, who also serves as the national team coach, has only been competing in contact Many.

"Maria" is the combination code of many first but I've also been training every day for this Many," said Alipayo, who has won several international [illegible] in the last six years, including a runner-up display in the World Championship.

"I just came here to coach Jamaica but on an invitation procedure decided that I should also compete in the Games," he said.

Alipayo lost by points to Bangsak Jaiyen of Thailand in the welterweight division (63.6-66 kg) with a score of 30-27.

Alumno from the Nihil Norlana Hotel of Iloilo by ASC (referee-stopped-contest) in round 3 of the middleweight division (71-75 kg).

The Philippines is also hoping for golden performances in archery and in the bicycle duel event—BMX on extreme sports.

Brian Pereña advanced to the final round of the men's individual event in archery yesterday at the Rajamangala Sports Complex. Worlds, Dan Lorge and Alejandro Mendoza also moved on to the quarterfinal for the archery event.

Arnaud Ernest Marianne was competing in the final round of the bicycle duel event in all parts time of the Rajamangala Cyclone Sports Stadium.

Meanwhile, Ginez dislodged Sandalmon to the race for overall honors with 5-20-10-11 gold-silver-bronze tally. But Sandalmon remained in strong contention for the top place at 20-13-6, while Thailand took third at 11-13-15.

ORGANIZERS and officials of the World Chinese Invitational Basketball tourney show their unity. From left, Sunny Co, George Tio, Arel Bunan, Oscar Polidpid, Benjamin Chua, Chua Cime, Joan Canlo, Lemuel Chua, Christian Tan

World Chinese caging slated here

HOPING TO FILL UP THE VOID LEFT BY THE scrapping of basketball at the recently-bankrupt Asian Center, the Philippines will also host the Cebu World Chinese Invitational basketball tournament in May 18-27 in different venues around Metro Manila.

"Every two small town we want to initiate possible an alternative for basketball fans who will miss the sport in the coming SEA Games," said Lorenzo Chua, president of the graduating Chinese Red Bluh College Evergreen Athletic Association.

The four-day event, which is planned right on the opening day of the 23rd SEAG, has already lured 1,000 Chinese cagers in four age divisions from 12 countries and 50 clubs around the world.

The opening ceremony will be held at the 10,000-seater Stadium with no less than Alfredo Moses Lim, Manila's grandpa, to preside speech.

Competitions will be divided into four age brackets for men and women: 35-under, 40-and-45-under, men's 55-under and men's 60-under, according to league spokesman Sonny Co, who was elected by Chinese Red Bluh College during only the legendary late Ang Sang before joining the PBA as an executive in the 1980s.

This is the first time the country will host the international event since the last one-night event held in Los Angeles and New York. It was only held in only two cities known: Thailand and Indonesia.

Story Anthony Reyes

La Salle Zobel 'Talobo ... Talon La Ika-25 Taon' tomorrow

THE PARENT-TEACHER-ASSOCIATION OF DE LA SALLE Zobel School in Acacia Building, Montefalcon, and Town in annual Family Day Bay-Athlet Meet

"Talon ... Talon La Ika-25 Taon" tomorrow from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. The affair which is being promoted in cooperation with Pagcor, Mc Donald's, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, Smart Family, Sun Photo, Canadian Bonna Board, El Nido Resorts, Gatorade Laboratories, PLDT Zobel, Sphera Sports, Fullcourt Cafe and Mercedes promises to be a grand and unforgettable 25th year. Lisa Ebesole is this year's president of the association.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
KAWANIHAN NG BUNTAG INTERNAS

November 17, 2005

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PUBLIC BIDDING NO. 03-008, 03-009, 03-010, 03-011

ITEM NO.	NAME OF CONTRACT	ABC	NON-REFUNDABLE FEE
03-008	Standard Operations and Security Services for the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR)	Php 100,000.00	Php1,000.00
03-009	Passenger Service Vehicle with Driver	1,000,000.00	1,000.00
03-010	Lease of Equipment for BIR	2,000,000.00	2,000.00
03-011	Taxi Service Vehicle	100,000.00	1,000.00

Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

Project Reference No.	DESCRIPTION	DELIVERY/ COMPLETION/ DURATION
03-008	Duties and Responsibilities: Contract Duration: Deployment: Number of Guards: Working Hours: Uniform:	January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006
03-009	Type of Vehicle: Model: Color: Number of Units: Working Hours: Fuel:	January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006
03-010	Type of Equipment: Model: Color: Number of Units: Working Hours: Fuel:	January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006
03-011	Type of Vehicle: Model: Color: Number of Units: Working Hours: Fuel:	January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006

1. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

2. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184.

3. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the BIR Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders upon the payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount stated above.

5. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 2:00 P.M. December 15, 2005. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in the Bidding Documents.

6. Bid opening shall be conducted by the BIR Secretariat Contract Review Committee immediately after the deadline for the submission of bids in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend the activity.

7. The BIR reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award in accordance with Section 41 of Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

8. For further information, please refer to:

Atty. Anthony Ray Ramos
Chairman, BIR Secretariat Contract Review Committee
Bureau of Internal Revenue
Room 1101, 11th Floor, BIR National Office Building
Diliman, Quezon City
Telefax No. 981-7100 local 3301
Email address: bir_secretariat@yahoo.com

ITEM NO.	DATE OF PURCHASE	TIME
03-008	December 1, 2005	8:00 AM
03-009	December 1, 2005	8:00 AM
03-010	December 1, 2005	8:00 AM
03-011	December 1, 2005	8:00 AM

ITEM NO.	DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS	TIME
03-008	December 15, 2005	2:00 PM
03-009	December 15, 2005	2:00 PM
03-010	December 15, 2005	2:00 PM
03-011	December 15, 2005	2:00 PM

All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in the Bidding Documents.

ITEM NO.	DATE OF OPENING OF BIDS	TIME
03-008	December 15, 2005	2:00 PM
03-009	December 15, 2005	2:00 PM
03-010	December 15, 2005	2:00 PM
03-011	December 15, 2005	2:00 PM

The Bureau of Internal Revenue reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award in accordance with Section 41 of Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further information, please refer to:

Atty. ANTHONY RAY RAMOS
Chairman, BIR Secretariat Contract Review Committee
Bureau of Internal Revenue
Room 1101, 11th Floor, BIR National Office Building
Diliman, Quezon City
Telefax No. 981-7100 local 3301
Email address: bir_secretariat@yahoo.com

WHAT'S INSIDE
Lorenzos attempt last-ditch Del Monte defense B3
Tourist arrivals seen hitting 2.6M B7

BUSINESS

October budget gap stays within ceiling

10-month deficit also 26% lower at ₱115.5B

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT's budget deficit stood lower than programmed in October after most revenue-collecting agencies recovered from shortfalls in the past and surpassed their targets for the month.

The Bureau of Treasury yesterday reported that the deficit for October amounted to only ₱7.1 billion, or 39 percent lower than the ₱18.2-billion ceiling set for the month.

This brought the cumulative January-October budget deficit to only ₱115.5 billion, or 26 percent lower than the ₱156-billion ceiling for the first 10 months of the year.

"This is better than what we expected. The latest deficit figure indicated that by the end of the year, we could have a deficit lower than the full-year target," Finance Secretary Juanita Teves said in a briefing yesterday. The government has set a deficit ceiling of ₱189 billion for 2004.

Earlier estimates by the government showed that the deficit for October would have reached ₱33 billion, or higher than the ceiling, and that the budget gap figure for the first 10 months would have stood 22 percent lower than the ceiling for the period.

The fiscal data for October highlighted the performance of the BIR and the Bureau of Customs, which both surpassed by a slight margin their revenue collection targets after having struggled to achieve their goals in the past months.

The BIR collected ₱47.5 billion compared with its ₱46.9-billion target for the month. The BOC collected ₱34.9 billion, higher than its ₱33.6-billion target. It was only the first time in nine months that the BOC met its target for a month.

On a cumulative basis, however, the BIR was still short by ₱8.6 billion of its target for OCTOBER to

Decline in local petroleum prices looms

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER SUFFERING THROUGH HIGHER of oil price increases, motorists may soon know a sigh of relief as world oil prices continue to slide and local prices reflect these in the coming days.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said local pump prices were not expected to go up any time soon as international prices soften and the price rollbacks

"We can now look forward to happier weekends," he told reporters yesterday.

The past several months before November, local oil companies raised their prices almost every week due to the high prices of oil in the world market.

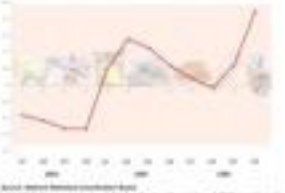
Shortly before the implementation of the expanded value-added tax on petroleum products, however, motorists

(TO PAGE B4)

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Leading Economic Indicators
(1st to 4th Quarter, 2003-2003)



CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱54.405 = $1

As of 5 p.m. Nov. 17, 2004

¥110.89 = $1

As of 5 p.m. Nov. 17, 2004

GOLD: $451.50/OZ

per ounce Hong Kong Nov. 19, 2004

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(for more market news, see Page B2)

Shares close lower

STOCK PRICES CLOSED [illegible] percent lower yesterday in [illegible]-handed technical correction, with [illegible] cautious ahead of a meeting of the central bank's monetary policy board, dealers said.

Traders said the market's slow correction is triggered on following recent gains.

They said fresh buy-side orders that the board may raise key interest rates again in bout of inflation.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index shed 4.62 points or 0.20 percent to 2,350.11 after trading between 2,339.18 and 2,362.06. The index rose last 2 percent over the last week.

Volume was [illegible] million shares worth ₱[illegible] million. Losers outnumbered gainers 82 to 51, while 44 stocks ended unchanged.

Thirty-day all-shares index retreated 1.37 points to 1,249.09. All sectoral indices retreated except Mining sectoral, which advanced. Declines led gainers 43 to 31, while 44 stocks were unchanged.

"After going through the profit-taking steps after the month's run-up, [illegible] are just waiting for a bigger movement [illegible] buying stocks again," said Nestor Aguila of SA Nichols Securities.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was the market's top-traded stock, sliding down ₱10 or 0.71 percent to ₱1,412.

Ayala Land Inc. gained 10 centavos to ₱6.20 while its parent Ayala Corp. advanced ₱5 to ₱[illegible].50.

Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) "B" shares, available to local and foreign investors, gained 50 centavos to ₱22. Meralco "A" shares, limited to local investors, ended unchanged at ₱14.33.

San Miguel Corp. "A" shares ended steady at ₱[illegible] San Miguel Corp. "B" shares were down 50 centavos at ₱[illegible].

"The market is digesting gains made this November. At one point, the month was up 11 percent for year to date, so this is just part of a healthy correction we have been anticipating," said AB Capital Securities analyst Ernie Baba. AP,D,MP

Pancake House nets ₱6.81M

By Elizabeth L. Sarabia

PANCAKE HOUSE INC. SWUNG SOME 6.81 million in the third quarter to, more or less, its investments in strong brands, the company said in its latest financial report.

From July to September, Pancake House posted a profit of ₱6.81 million, reversing a loss of ₱61.176 in the same quarter last year.

Revenue during the third quarter rose 29 percent to ₱178.9 million.

Pancake House's consolidated net income for the nine-month period stood at ₱11.79 million, up 11 percent from ₱10.6 million in the same period last year.

Total revenue in the nine-month period amounted to ₱467.6 million, up 22 percent from last year due to the growth in franchise fees and better profit margins arising from price adjustments implemented in May to cover for higher cost of raw materials.

A recently acquired subsidiary, restaurant chain Bonchon, contributed ₱160.34 million to total revenue.

Sales are expected to further improve after additional Bonchon outlets open in Subic, The Fort, Tagaytay, Alabang and Technopark.

"The last 18 months was painful as finances since mostly three new franchisees mean but are are investing in co-owned stores in the future," said Manfred Lorenzo, Pancake Houses Bun.

Lorenzo Ejercito also recently bought Japanese food brand Tenkuki Inc, which is expected to grow its revenue and sales further.

PAL cuts passenger, cargo surcharges

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES WILL REDUCE ITS fuel surcharge for international cargo by $0.05 a kilo starting Nov. 21, the latest move by the flag carrier to ease the burden on the market following a similar rollback for domestic passenger travel this week.

PAL said cargo uplifted from Manila, Cebu, Davao and Sta. Rosa City bound for the United States, Canada and Korea will now be subject to a fuel surcharge of $0.04 a kilo, down from $0.09, as the base Singapore Fuel Price Index (FPI) fell for the third week in a row.

"Again, like our surcharge rollback for our domestic passengers, we are easing the burden on our cargo customers," said PAL executive vice president Henry Sy Jr.

"We understand their difficult economic situation at this time, particularly with the general rise in prices owing to the expanded VAT. This move should give cargo shippers a much-needed break."

DISCLOSURES

LMG Chemicals Corp. (LCC) announced the termination of agreement between Chemplast Marketing Corp., a wholly owned subsidiary of LCC, and Basic Chemical Solutions NV Cure PBL Ltd., for the supply of Liquid Caustic Soda effective January 18, 2006.

BDO of the Philippine Islands declared a cash dividend of ₱0.50 per share to all outstanding common shares, payable to stockholders of record 15 days after receipt of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas approval.

MIAH Terminals Inc. announced the resignation of Mark Anthony Hijara as Senior Vice President for Container Terminal Station to replace Mrs. Belle Hampton.

APM-A Land Inc. declared a regular cash dividend of ₱0.04 per share to all outstanding common shares. Record date for stockholders entitled to the cash dividend is on May 16 and payment is on June 1, 2006. The stock and transfer books of the corporation will be closed for the transfer of shares from Dec. 15 to 16. — **Consolidated Chona Kabigting, PDI Research**

Lorenzos attempt last-ditch Del Monte defense

"THE LORENZOS OF DEL MONTE ARE holding talks with an "Indian Chief" food conglomerate to oppose what is shaping up as a hostile takeover by the Five Points Group of the food-and-beverage company, according to the pro-Lorenzo group.

The decision was reached during a [illegible] among the eight Lorenzo siblings and the Lorenzo matriarch the other day, given the Dec. 1 deadline to match the price of [illegible] offer made by Five Points.

The Hoffy meeting was held after Five Points chair Manuel V. Pangilinan and [illegible] Mario Garrucho, chair of the Lorenzo holding company Rockenbay and Co. Inc. and Lorenzo emerging "detached" by the lack of details of the takeover plan, especially as regard to the Philippine properties that Del Monte and the Lorenzos have long cherished, equity and purchase agreements.

"I don't think the concept of working [illegible]

gether but been dictated," Lorenzo told reporters Wednesday in answer to a question about a possible alliance with the Lorenzos and Five Points.

Lorenzo even volunteered that both he and Pangilinan were Pharmacy graduates, in addition to both being patrons of the luckless Meralco basketball team.

In comparison with the general secretary office, Five Points has announced a [illegible]

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JOB

Cathay Land spending P3.1B on 5 property projects in Sta. Rosa

By Ronnel W. Domingo

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER Cathay Land Inc. is launching five projects worth P3.1 billion that will be built over the next two years in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Company president Arthur T. Ng said in a briefing that pre-selling of low-cost units is not completely

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Decline in local petroleum prices looms

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Support our athletes as they go faster, higher and stronger for the honor of our nation. Witness our Pinoy athletes in action as they go head to head with the region's best in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games!
23rd SEA GAMES
GSIS
supports the Philippines' quest for a stronger nation.
Government Service Insurance System

WTO guidance from global publications

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

DOING A HERCULES OF SEVEN days this month, guidance for our government negotiators on the coming World Trade Organization (WTO) December meeting can be obtained from three international publications.

Last Nov. 8, the Financial Times based in the United Kingdom published a letter signed by 41 chief executives of the largest multinational corporations. It urged a swift conclusion to the WTO negotiations. On Nov. 13, the Philippine Daily Inquirer published an article written by World Bank president Paul Wolfowitz. It was entitled "Time to make Doha succeed."

On Nov. 14, US-based business magazine published an interview with Amartya Sen, 1998 Nobel Prize awardee for economics. It discussed solutions to address poverty across the globe.

Making Doha succeed

Doha is the place where the WTO members decided this developed, opened, not just trade for trade's sake, should be the focus of the next round of WTO negotiations.

Wolfowitz wrote: "The Doha development round of trade talks will be judged by one simple test: Does it enable people in poor countries to sell more of their goods overseas, creating more jobs, and lifting their incomes?"

He emphasizes the need to developed countries to bring down their tariff barriers, which is a formidable objective in itself, to be sure. "The Doha development round must succeed, and success means that developing countries have greater access to global markets."

We generally agree with the above point of view. But that is only half of the picture. The other half is that developed countries must then they will not bring down their tariffs unless developing countries do the same.

On the surface, this sounds reasonable. But when we consider having the playing field, we should include the reality of government support. This is made up of both tariffs and subsidies.

For agriculture, developed countries have massive subsidies (e.g. in 2000, the subsidy levels were $264.8 billion for the US and $73.2 billion for the European Union), while developing countries have very minimal ones (for the same year, the Philippine had $386 million). Therefore, having developing countries to decrease their tariffs without the developed countries appropriately decreasing their subsidies is unfair and unjust.

If this happens, the net result will be that poverty will increase instead of decrease. While there may be some winners who will benefit from cheaper yellow developed country markets, there will be billions of losers coming from the already poor people that will lose their livelihood from unfairly subsidized imports.

Corporate chief executives

The open letter signed by chief executives of 41 multinational corporations states: "Multilateral initiatives to liberalize world trade and improve market access for goods and services are a strong driving force for global economic growth, job creation, and wider consumer choice, as well as keeping us check the ever present threat of protectionism."

One may misinterpret this to mean that any trade will automatically mean economic growth. However, the information provided by the Center for Economic Policy Research in the table (see this page, right) does not question this truth of Latin America shows the most dramatic reversal of fortunes. Many attribute this to the fact that from 1960 to 2000, Latin America underwent unilateral and very rapid liberalization across the board.

COMMENTARY

These years constituted a period of unprecedented trade liberalization, where the average cost for the cost of trade to grow. Domestic products went from 46 percent to almost 60 percent (International Labor Organization 2001). There appears to be no strong correlation between growth and increased trade flows. The evidence shows growth happens only if a specific country's economy is strong enough to benefit from the trade.

Recipe for development

Nobel Prize awardee Amartya Sen's views can guide our government negotiators so that they keep sustainable development, rather than just trade, as their most objective for the new WTO round. It's combatting poverty and enhancing human security. Sen cites two requirements: "a clear focus on human lives," and "an appreciation of the role of society and of social arrangements in making human lives more secure or a conservative way."

Gross national product and volume of foreign trade are helpful descriptive indicators. But Sen says that "their value must depend on what they do to the lives and freedoms of the people involved." (see interview note/principal points).

This then is the bottom line: the success or failure of the WTO negotiations will depend on "what it does to our lives and freedoms," especially the many poor in our agricultural sector. On the surface, trade looks good and protectionism looks bad. But in a different context, unfair trade will cause poverty and justified protectionism against subsidized imports will help our people survive.

We want the WTO negotiation to succeed, but only if it truly follows the Doha development spirit. But if it will cause more harm than good, then no deal is better than a bad deal.

We are grateful that the Department of Agriculture also takes this stand and has officially recognized key Aliyans agriculture farmer leaders to give inputs during the negotiations. If you wish to help, please contact one such officially recognized leader, Arsenio Tanchuling, at 09206344383. He will be in Hong Kong to fight for your views on fair, rather than free, trade.

The author is Agri-watch chairman cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary for agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 8516603.

AVERAGE GROWTH OF 175 COUNTRIES

	1960-'75	1980-2000
Country groupings		
Higher Income Per Capita	2.1.3%	2.1.3%
Lowest Income Per Capita	1.7%	1.7%
Non-Latin America #s Lab		

Cocktales

conditional sale agreement to acquire the nearly 40 percent stake of the troubled Indian food conglomerate, Orco. Atchd Menin Pedrilla, president that the Lorenzos retain their preemptive rights equivalent to the family's 21 percent stake in Del Monte.

Before the First Pacific offer, the Cibis block was nearly acquired by tuipan Lucio Tan in April, only to fail following disagreement over sale terms, especially on the amount of cash the tuipan would have to shell out for a mandatory general tender offer that the tuipan's financial advisors had initially thought their principal could escape.

It was not immediately clear why the Lorenzos set out on the Cibis sale, which has been on the market for nearly two years now, only to rally with an FPI bum transaction with a potential counterbidder.

First Pacific has estimated it would need $3.68 million, in addition to the $0.64 million in cash for the Cibis stake, to fund the general offer.

According to the pro-Lorenzo gossipists, there is a continuing debate within the family as to the prudence of taking borrowed money to counter the First Pacific offer, especially in the light of the aggressive expansion of De Saint's Pernod-Ricard rival.

But, as Martin Simwell Attard, the Del Monte regulator "grass between money," the shakedown business having been a legacy of their late dad, the late collegiate basketball legend Mero Lorenzo.

Money-go-round

• THE US fund managed by Jaime Gonzales is looking at buying into Bank of Commerce, possibly through the SPI stake-to-cash point. Gonzales, however, said the market rumor was "too correct."

• THE CENTRAL Azucarera de Tarlac is having trading suspension today for failing to submit the annual report for the fiscal year that ended June 30 and the company's failure to pay the penalties for the concerned violations.

Counselled by the family of former President Aquino, CAT owns the sizable land backlands Cadiz.

Heard through the grapevine

AFTER the failed transport strike on Monday, the Fleet 13 held another tearful presentation the following day (Saturday the opposition in the Senate, simultaneously with the ongoing "people's hearing" inquiry, reopened yet another series of the "Gen2 hearings, all in the hope of building up clout to summon for a New Year push.

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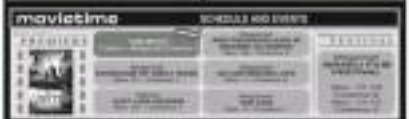

GUARANTEED SEATS

METRO MANILA

LUZON

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

What's in a name?

Zsa Zsa Padilla is still a 'Tatlonghari' in legal documents, including her passport

By Nito Valera

ZSA ZSA PADILLA STILL BEARS THE name of her ex-husband, Modesto Tatlonghari in legal documents even if their marriage was annulled early this year.

"It's complicated," said Zsa Zsa during an exclusive interview with Inquirer Entertainment. "I still have to fix some documents, including my passport, which I use a lot because I'm always abroad doing shows."

Hovering back to her maiden name would come before she finally marries Dolphy, her live-in partner for 20 years. But Zsa Zsa, 41, and the 77-year-old comedian have no set another wedding date after their planned nuptials in December last year was aborted—because the annulment papers had not come through early enough.

"My ex-husband did not have anything to do with that," she stressed. "I want to make it clear that he did not contest my petition for annulment."

Traumatic

Zsa Zsa did not explain further how the annulment was botched. But she confirmed that the aborted wedding was a traumatic experience for her.

"We already had the dress. We had sent out invitations," she recalled. "I can't plan another wedding so soon after."

But when she does, it will be "very simple," according to Zsa Zsa. "But right now, Dolphy and I are not even talking about it."

In an earlier interview with Inquirer Entertainment, Dolphy declared that one of his biggest wishes was to see Zsa Zsa donate the seven-carat he gave her to charity.

Zsa Zsa is set to appear in "Me, Legal Wife," Regal Entertainment's entry in the Metro Manila Film Festival next month.

"I had a blast doing the film," said Zsa Zsa. "I've always wanted to be a comedienne, and I tried to do stand-up [comedy] here."

Spellbinding Potter flick

By Oliver M. Palumbaro
Contributor

HARRY POTTER STILL RUNS IN "HARRY Potter and the Goblet of Fire," fourth installment in the hit book series-turned-movie franchise, as its young actors and characters are irrevocably transformed by their biggest challenges yet: adolescence. The stories here appendicitis-ers to new teen and former viewers, and even to most adults. They're growing up, and this is affecting them in new relationships and challenges that seems mature portion of an wide viewing demographic can identify with.

This does not mean that their dealings will be inspired by "The O.C." anytime soon; the new adventures still contain a Disney-esque innocence and while sharing a more epic, grander cinema.

Review

We discover a more assertive side to Harry (Daniel Radcliffe), as he becomes the object of his desperate schoolmates' envy when a powerful object, the Goblet of Fire, mysteriously finds him to represent them in an inter-school contest called the Triwizard Tournament. His close pals, the unpredictable Ron (Rupert Grint) and the blossoming Hermione (Emma Watson) have their motivations common to women. More problems for them mean more viewing enjoyment for us, especially since the trio's exploits here are finely executed.

A broader scope of the mythology's entire world is explored by introducing magic practitioners in the Triwizard event. Meeting newcomers to the series helps things more interesting at Hogwarts, and for Harry's plight.

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" richly advances the saga in other major aspects as well. There's death, a resurrection, a baneful deed, and a tortured series of purpose by the movie's end—enough to establish startling signs of things to come. Jim director Mike Newell's occasional lapse on the young heroes' inept school year allows him to develop multiple characters in non-stop, complicated and expansive scenarios in two and a half hours. He incorporates an eclectic visual strength that's different from Alfonso Cuaron's atmospheric approach in "Prisoner of Azkaban," but it's still bloody magical.

Tourist arrivals seen hitting 2.6M

By Elizabeth L. Saturno

THE DEPARTMENT of Tourism (DOT) expects international tourist arrivals growth to reach at least 15 percent to 2.6 million this year from 2.3 million last year, with someone coming from Koreans as well as foreign passport holders from the United States and Canada.

Tourism regional director Lourdes Aquilo said during the Good News Explorer at the Global Cafe in Makati yesterday that the Korean market will be fueling growth in the region.

"The number of Korean tourists arriving [here] are registering a healthy growth rate. In 2004, they already contributed 1 million to Japan as the number two market, posting a growth of 13 percent," Aquilo said.

She said that based on data from the Bureau of Immigration, tourists from the US and Canada, who rank after Japan and Korea, are also expected to top the 1 million mark this year.

Aquilo noted that most Koreans, who belong to a younger bracket—aged 20 to 30—prefer the Philippines to Japan because English, the destination's official language, is not a barrier to communication.

Aside from these markets, the DOT has also identified other destinations in the Philippines to domestic tourists. These are Metro Manila, Cebu, Clark-Subic, Baguio-Banaue, Cebu-Bohol, Ilocos and Caramoan.

The DOT's budget for tourism promotion is aimed to increase next year to maximize the inflow of tourists, especially from the key markets of Japan, China and Korea.

These efforts would also have to be supported by moves to strengthen domestic tourism by improving traffic problems, roads and highways, hotel accommodations or restoration, utilities and other related services.

The latest year's approved budget for the DOT was around P600 million, of which around 25 percent was spent on promotions.

The government has tried to beef up its promotional activities in four high-yielding markets: South Korea, US, Canada and China.

In China for example, the DOT has been advertising the Philippines in several local languages, and it has increased its bringing in reporters.

Aside from these spend an average of $91 a day and stay for three to four days in the Philippines.

From January to September, the US topped tourist arrivals with 392,706, followed by Korea with 340,043 and Japan at 333,108. DOT data showed.

On the other hand, Filipinos that have acquired foreign citizenship spend an average of $81 a day but are more aggressive shoppers, he said.

Aquilo added that the DOT's budget for tourism promotion must be increased next year to maximize the inflow of tourists, especially from the key markets of Japan, China and Korea.

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Aside from these

Investment Funds of	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
	Nov. 14, 2005	Nov. 7, 2005
Fixed Income Fund	1.068490	1.064080
Balanced Fund	1.062333	1.053619
Equity Fund	1.049226	1.039260

Use of hybrid rice increases

By Christine A. Gaylican

HYBRID RICE technology as sales of its seeds have risen threefold in two to three years, industry officials revealed.

Producers and distributors of hybrid rice seeds, led by SL Agritech Inc. and Bayer CropScience Philippines, along with farmers' cooperatives, said in separate interviews that seed sales have been rising this year.

Hybrid rice seeds promise to increase yields from 4 metric tons to 9 and in time perhaps even 12 metric tons per hectare. Bayer CropScience Philippines estimated that sales of the crop can grow by at least 25 percent this year.

Bayer, which distributes the Bigante seeds, ranks as the third largest producer and seller of hybrid seeds.

"We felt a growth in sales as more farmers shifted to hybrid rice seeds because the changing weather conditions encouraged them to invest in good seeds," Bayer's Philippine Biosciences manager Carlos Miguel Sagisi said in an interview.

SL Agritech president and CEO Henry Lim Bon Liong said that, for his company, a 12-percent increase in sales has been attained in the first semester and could be exceeded by yearend.

According to a study done by the Department of Agriculture's regional offices, farmers surveyed nationwide reported that gross income obtained from planting SL Agritech's SL-8 hybrid rice nearly averaged at P50,000 per hectare per harvest. Cultivating Bayer's Bigante seeds brings in an estimated P54,000 per hectare.

On the other hand, the average cost of production using these rice varieties ranges between P19,000 and P30,000 per hectare for each planting season.

The cultivation of hybrid rice seeds is targeted to prop up the country's palay production. From a sluggish growth rate in the first semester, stronger palay production would push up the agriculture sector's output for the year. Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban said in a separate interview.

"From 250,000 hectares planted with hybrid rice last year, the DA and private sector have set to cultivate the high yielding seeds on 260,000 hectares that could at least bring a million metric tons of palay to be harvested," Panganiban said.

He noted that the agency is still optimistic that the rice production target of 16.1 million tons could still be achieved by the end of the year.

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Enquiries
Rosin Jong Hoong
+65 6235 3828
rhoong@christies.com

Cecilia Cheng
+85 6235 3828
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Catalogues
(HK) +852 2521 1256
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PLANTATION Bay believes in protecting the environment to improve quality of life

Cebu resort protects environment, people

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

PLANTATION BAY RESORT AND SPA IN CEBU has become a favorite destination in the Philippines of both locals and foreigners, especially Koreans and Japanese, because of its pristine natural environment.

There are man-made lagoons, but Plantation Bay also owns mangrove farms and coral reefs ideal for snorkeling and scuba diving.

All the leasing however, does not come by accident.

Realizing that the resort's popularity success is contingent if its environment is protected, Plantation Bay has adopted an extensive environmental management program that covers everything from the proper treatment of its sewage to the helping of the neighboring barangays take care of their surroundings too.

Ms. Lourdes Montinola, an architect by profession who was commissioned by Plantation Bay to supervise its environmental management program, tells the Inquirer that the resort has to do its share to protect the environment because it is in what is termed a "transition area."

Translation, she says, because Plantation Bay is nestled on land in one, but on a little of both, thus is more vulnerable than other types of environment.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

"That's why we can not only say resolve preservation," Montinola said, "we have to take an integrated approach to environmental conservation."

Plantation Bay planned management will ensure the resort for different fish to live in, as well as relocated mangroves to allow them to protect marine life and maintain the coral reefs.

Since the resort opened in 1998, there has been a significant regeneration of coral reefs in Plantation Bay's part of Mactan Channel.

Plantation Bay also makes sure that it will not be part of the island's environmental problems.

Montinola says Plantation Bay has never used pesticides on its surroundings, and all of its foods, from the kitchen to the rooms are recycled. No waste is dumped into the sea.

The resort's garbage is treated to biodegradable, and some of the garbage is recycled to fish feed. Bottles and cans are separated and sold to recyclers.

It also grows some of its fish for consumption to fishponds within the hotel. It also says to own seaweed and even engages in various efforts to increase production of organic fertilizer.

Care for the environment was on the mind of the resort owners from the start of construction.

(Next)

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RP named best in microfinance

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES HAS BEEN named the best at implementing microfinance programs to reduce poverty.

The Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), a World-Bank assisted body advocating the development of microfinance, gave the award to the Philippines during the celebration of the International Year of Microcredit held at the United Nations' headquarters in New York City last Nov. 8.

The Philippines was chosen from among 100 countries implementing microfinance programs.

CGAP is a consortium of 28 multilateral agencies, bilateral institutions and private sector organizations that provide assistance to countries to assist their poor populations.

"Microfinance has been identified as one of the best ways to address poverty, and now the Philippines is at the forefront of this goal," said Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran, who represented the Philippines during the celebration.

Beltran said the recognition was a result of the establishment of the National Strategy for Microfinance, which served as a blueprint for easing credit access for the poor.

Under the National Strategy for Microfinance, the national government will strive to improve the delivery of funds for credit to the poor.

This was done by assigning financial institutions to distribute funds for microcredit, therefore veering away from the old practice of allowing any interested government agency to perform the task.

The old practice had been prone to corruption, Beltran said.

The National Strategy for Microfinance likewise required the development of a standard chart of accounts and financial performance indicators that will guide financial institutions in the implementation of microfinance programs.

A manual for operations of the Cooperative Development Authority has also been developed to improve the CDA's capability to strengthen cooperatives.

The country's microfinance development program also had to do with the government's initiative to create a national credit bureau, which will house information on the credit standing of borrowers.

It was also seen encouraging credit providers to expand their services.

The credit bureau is a work in progress by various agencies led by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Department of Finance.

Beltran said that at present, there are private financial institutions providing microfinance services to the poor in provinces all over the country.

The finance official said the government would continue the task of expanding the coverage of microcredit facilities for the poor, especially after receiving the CGAP award.

"The award is a testament to the government's efforts to help the poor and make them contribute to the country's economic performance," Beltran said.

Cebu resort . . .

From page B8

The lagoon was built over barren rock, so no ecosystem was affected when the resort was put up, and coconut timber was widely used. Plastics were avoided to prevent fire and smoke hazards.

Plantation Bay's conservation efforts, however, would come to naught if it did not engage the surrounding communities who are in the same "transition" environment.

Plantation Bay representatives sit on the council of Barangay Marigondon to help the community address environmental and livelihood issues.

"Tourism has to be a tool for livelihood," Martinez said, "if their basic needs are met, then they don't need to harness illegally from the sea."

Plantation Bay also provides free school bus service in the community, making it possible for local children who could not afford public transportation to get basic education.

Martinez added that the locals get first crack at employment opportunities, such as boating services for guests during peak seasons.

She said that by getting the communities to benefit from the tourism attracted by Plantation Bay, the resort helps improve their lives.

"At the end of the day, everybody benefits because the tourists will feel happy about staying here," she said, "such that when they think about Cebu, they will think about pleasant memories."

GOINGS-ON

RP to host rice forum

MORE than 500 of the world's renowned rice scientists and researchers will be in the Philippines from November 20-23 for the 5th International Rice Genetics Symposium.

To be held at the Isla Ballroom of the Edsa Shangri-la Hotel in Mandaluyong City, the symposium will be an opportunity for the Philippine rice industry to hear the latest in rice research and its applications to boost rice production.

The symposium will also allow local rice researchers to know more about the products of rice genertics research from around the world.

The symposium is organized by the International Rice Research Institute in Los Banos, Laguna.

IRRI has been at the forefront of scientific research efforts to enhance quality and yield of rice while preserving the environment.

Education firm execs in RP

Executives of Neurolanguage Corp., an international education company based in Ottawa, Canada, are in the Philippines for a visit ending today for intensive training of partner Gemini IT Consulting.

The executives will also hold a half-day seminar to be attended by representatives from call center companies, schools, universities and colleges, the Department of Education and various embassies in the country.

Neurolanguage offers e-learning solutions for executive English language training. It also specializes in large scale e-learning deployment in school systems around the world.

Editor Chele Banal-Paronon

LIFESTYLE

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDN
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KATRINA and Jean Goulbourn take a bow.

Fashion on fire

Jean and Katrina Goulbourn's "Tapestry," divided into segments inspired by the elements, was equal parts fashion show and fabric exhibit

Text by Abet T. Parpan
Photos by Karl Sandeling

SIMILARGEO raises native-inked skirt designed to simulate worm

CHRISTMAS CAME A month early at the Ayala Museum as the mother-and-daughter team of Jean and Katrina Goulbourn recently unfurled their version of "Tapestry" in a 60-piece collection using richly textured and often colorful and beaded fabrics by Silk Cocoon.

Silk Cocoon, of course, is the company Jean founded 11 years ago as an extension of her creativity and foresight, which began several decades earlier with her own RTW line for 1M.

Instead of getting bogged down by the dearth of quality local fabrics, Jean and her collaborators put workers into their own hands by creating their own materials.

Over the years, Silk Cocoon has grown to provide buyers abroad with such fabrics as pina silk and lacy cotton pineapple cloth for fashion and the home. Katrina is primarily in charge of Silk Cocoon's bridal business, which she describes as modern and stylized heritage.

The Goulbourns now employ about 50 people, 60 of whom work at their factory. Around 80 percent of the company's output is exported abroad.

But as one observer said, the family tradition of putting the envelope as far as fashion is concerned dates back many centuries to Italian designer Schiaparelli. Lita Higgins, Jean's late aunt, who founded Manila Fashion School.

Fashion and fabric show

The show, which director Bobby Carcasas divided into several segments inspired by the elements, was equal parts fashion show and fabric exhibit.

The wood segment, for instance, featured a couple of cohesions made of cotton and strips of leather in jungle shades such as chocolate brown and leafy green. The clothes, from the towering headdress to the zipper-thunder wooden bangles and clickers, had an African feel to it reminiscent of outfits worn by Bridesmaids.

Actually, said Katrina, the particular fabric was saved for Saturday. Due to the venue's limited space, however, they weren't able to stage a multimedia show to showcase the raw textile's various uses.

"Except for the cotton and velvet, all the fabrics that were featured in the show were

(CONTINUED ON C2)

BLUEBIRD OVERDRIVE translates oil-soaked print embellished with embroidery and silk copper appliqué

A ROSE of a dress

EVERGREEN

TATTOOED look

FORM-FLATTERING

Fashion on fire

From page B1

room," Rachita said. "But we did our own dyeing to achieve the colors we wanted."

While the silk portion featured generic and signature motifs from yards upon yards of documented *piña* silk re-simulous a light, buoyant feel, the metal portion shimmered in rich, delicious details courtesy of colorful crushed *piña* embellished with embroidery and applique fashioned from metallic silk.

The modulating waves of water, captured in draped, architectural and beaded blue *piña* numbers, was an ideal foil to the show's clear segments, which consisted of silk separates made livelier by cutlink embroidery and bits of brocade.

Layered pieces

Just a few of the pieces in the collection, especially the layered pieces and tucked and wrapped pajama, were meant for the mannequin versions. In fact, I found a few of the heavy pieces a bit too flamboyant and unflattering to the ultimate figure, even on swim models.

This was probably the reason why the Godbosses made "real" people such as Cielito Lopez, Jessy Epperson, Shamira Arroche, Tina Tiniu, Xeng Cabarra and JP Isaac, among others, wear their clothes.

Manila's prominent movers and shakers played to the gallery in toned-down theories grouped under the show's sixth segment. Flamingo in palm-weaved silk were later by professional male models who exuded their own brand of magic.

One of my favorites, however, was the colorful batong pantos consisting of beaded pieces inspired by tattoos and not Indian patterns as I earlier surmised. In lieu of embroidery, the Godbosses made use of coco shells and sequins to embellish their creations.

Such unusual, it's bit daring, pieces were certainly not meant for the shy. If anything, they were probably just in keeping with the spirit that has kept the fire of creativity burning in the house of Lira-Godbosses for three generations now.

E-mail the author at ervgarcia@inquirer.com.ph.

EDITOR'S Blade chic

AFRICAN-INSPIRED colorful styles of leather and canvas

BRACKO super-for a '70s feel

LAYERED in rich fabrics

TIERS and tassels swing on a Lara dress

What do you wish to hide and what do you seek?

by Ria Fernandez-Prieto

Behold new skin

By Alex T. Vergara

Dr. Vicki Belo reveals the next big things as far as beauty and skin care go

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, not a few high profile clients have returned to the founders of Belo Dermaage to track harder to keep still-side signs of aging at bay.

The same principles which have made Belo Dermaage such a favorite with powerful like the likes of Lucy Torres-Gutierrez, Albert Martinez, Bianca Bonifacio and Margie Moran-Floirendo can now be applied to other parts of the body such as the back, stomach, arms, knees and elbows.

Fresh from a trip to Taiwan, Belo, where she was inducted into the International Scientific Cutting Lifestyle Therapy Group, Dr. Vicki Belo, medical director of the Belo Medical Group, reveals to me the ultimate the next big things in fat reduction and skin care go.

"Overexposure to the sun and aging by leaps and bounds," says Belo. "To keep in step with the times, I have to keep researching and presenting huge amounts of money on all sorts of new machines and procedures."

Non-facial areas

Dubbed as a cosmeceutical form of facelift for people in their 40's and 50's, Belo Dermaage uses ultra-frequencies that "unravel" the tissues beneath the face to restore their regenerative and regeneration process. The non-laser treatment involves a series of passes on the cheeks, forehead, chin, jaw line and even the nose.

Belo says the same technology can soon be applied on other parts of the body to address such common problems as sagging and wrinkling, just like what it does in the face. Belo Dermaage also tightens the muscles of the legs, arms, back and what have you by boosting their collagen production. The treatment requires sessions.

Flash Lamp Pulsed Dye Laser

Milk and coffee should pretty on earth's crevices and not on your face. But if they are parts of your facial topography in the form of freckles and acne scars, they can soon be flattened to size by an intense mixture a combination of the Flash Lamp Pulsed Dye Laser and the V-Beam and Blue Peel, an improved version of Dermabrasion. The first is ever to do anything related. (She supposed color of freckles and acne scars).

If aged skin lacks collagen, the opposite is true for sections of the skin with freckles and acne scars. By softening an area collagen to these problem areas, the Flash Lamp Pulsed Dye Laser evens out the skin's texture for a more flawless complexion.

ND YAG

Do you find going under the knife too drastic for your comfort to replace off to cure fat?

The ND YAG is the patient's answer ally in their battle with the bulge. Unlike the more invasive liposuction, this latest development is a laser-assisted liposuction machine designed to get rid of minor bumps and bulges imperfections to muscle and clothing.

Whereas the "Lipo light" is called so primarily on problem areas to get the desired effect, the ND YAG comes with a probe that's directly inserted under the skin to literally melt the fat away. The unwanted element, in turn, is eliminated via the patient's urine.

Both a "slide-drop" process is reportedly more effective than the superficial approach. For one, ND YAG is able to get around the skin, which is itself safe as a bonus. The treatment requires local anesthesia.

Hydrolase

Oil, lotions and other topical solutions won't do the trick. If you're close to giving up hope of ever banishing those pesky stretch marks, take heart because Hydrolase is here.

Instead of lasers, Hydrolase emits beams of light designed to cross over the color of the skin. That's why Belo also recommends the procedure to help get rid of scars and old tans. So even just the texture of damaged skin due to stretch marks, Hydrolase should be combined with Carbon Dioxide Therapy.

E-mail the author at www.gmail.com

THE LAUNCH. (From left) Eschong Formoso, Jackie Ikey, Celia Formoso, Rev. Manny Villar and Paolo Villar

LINDSAY Studded Bag, P433

SOFIE Handbag, P673

KIM Shoulder Bag, P429

AUDREY Bag, P991

A girl's best friend

Chelsea, a direct sales company named after an adorable Pomeranian, has a lot to offer both dealers and buyers

By Piero Pacier

CHELSEA the adorable Pomeranian

KATE Mini Tote, P549

When MR. MANNY Villar cut the ribbon at the launch of Chelsea Direct Sales in Ilustmall, he did more than just open a new store.

The launch also opened doors for Filipinos looking for a way to earn extra cash during these hard times. Since its launch, Chelsea Direct Sales has given business opportunities to over 5,500 dealers in the accessory majority of them women.

Ms. Celia Formoso, managing director of Chelsea, says, "We actually started as a supplier for other direct sales companies." But she and other like-minded people decided to start their own corporation. "Chelsea was put up by people who have been in the business for a long time now."

With experienced and dedicated individuals in the company it's no wonder the speed at Chelsea's growth has been remarkable. Its main headquarters is in Ilustmall, a strategic location for the company.

Right now, Chelsea has 78 business centers around the country. It also intends to open more branches in Cabanatuan, Cebu, Davao, Naga and Alabang by January 2006.

People interested in this opportunity can become dealers by purchasing a business kit for P200. The kit includes a company brochure, registration forms, business cards, flyers, order forms, a Chelsea bag and a "magalog" (Chelsea's catalog that looks more like a magazine than a catalog). A new catalog is released every three months.

The names over features Jackie Ikey, Chelsea's 11-year-old image model, and Chelsea, the adorable Pomeranian the company was named after (Thus the tagline "A girl's best friend").

The Fresh Accessories were chosen after a go-see of talents from four different agencies. In the "magaling," she models the different products Chelsea offers. There are bags, footwear, watches, jewelry and other accessories.

Notable ones include the Basket Weave Punch (P999), the Lindsay Studded Bag (P636), Chloe Shoulder Bag (P799), the Two-Tone Filigree Shoulder Tote Necklace and Bracelet gift set (P399), Time Look Watch gift set (P1,295), the Premier Necklace (P260), the Coin Clutch Bracelet and Earring gift set (P599) and the Four Seasons Gift Set Jewelry Collection.

Aside from fashion items, there are also sports items (badminton rackets, badminton bags, rubber shoes, basketball, volleyball and soccer balls) and products for the home. Parents with infants will appreciate items for babies which include feeding sets, training cups and baby bags.

There are gift items for men (pocket manicuring tape, grooming set, magnetic screwdriver with flashlight) and women (makeup kit, pore cleaner, facial massager), as well as premium for couples who like their things in match (wristwatches, interchangeable watches and wallets).

Formoso says 85 percent of the products are made locally while 95 percent are imported.

Early next year, Chelsea will also be launching its personal skin care line.

Whether you're a dealer or a buyer, Chelsea has a lot to offer. They don't call the brand a girl's best friend for nothing.

Unit 2111 in B23, 2/L, Ilustmall Bldg. cor. Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City. Call 7260868.

CHELSEA Bone Slides, P799

LINDSAY City Slides, P499

ASHLEY Daisy Thongs, P499

CHELSEA Aqua Slides, P799